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**IMPORTANT DOCTRINES**  
**OF THE**  
**TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION,**  
**EXPLAINED, DEMONSTRATED,**  
**AND**  
**VINDICATED FROM VULGAR ERRORS.**

INCLUDING, AMONG OTHERS,

THE LORD'S SECOND ADVENT:	THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST, AND SALVATION BY HIS BLOOD:
THE DIVINE CHARACTER, UNITY, TRI- NITY, AND PERSON:	HIS MEDIATION AND ATONEMENT:
THE ASSUMPTION OF HUMANITY AND PUTTING FORTH, THEREBY, OF THE POWER OF REDEMPTION:	THE JUSTIFICATION OF A SINNER: HARMONY WITH THE DOCTRINE OF A PLURALITY OF WORLDS.

BEING A

**SERIES OF LECTURES,**

DELIVERED AT THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH, IN CROSS STREET, HATTON  
GARDEN, LONDON.

**By THE REV. S. NOBLE,**

AUTHOR OF "THE PLENARY INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES ASSERTED," &c.;  
"AN APPEAL IN BEHALF OF THE VIEWS AND DOCTRINES OF THE  
NEW CHURCH BELIEVED TO BE SIGNIFIED BY THE  
NEW JERUSALEM;" AND OTHER WORKS.

**WITH AN INTRODUCTION,**  
**BY GEORGE BUSH.**

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# INTRODUCTION

## TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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It is usually a matter of no small surprise to those who are not deterred by the force of prejudice from a candid examination of the works of Swedenborg, to find in them, not merely a mass of alleged disclosures of the various phenomena of the other life, but a clear, consistent, and well argued system of religious doctrines. To one who has hitherto been led to regard him simply in the character which the christian world seems to have agreed to ascribe to him,—that of an amiable but deluded visionary, who dealt solely in the vagaries of a disordered imagination,—it opens a world of fresh wonder to perceive, as he advances in his inquiry, that a new and most impressive view of the grand doctrines of Christianity is continually unfolding before him, one that appeals with such power and demonstration to his calmest reason, that before he is aware he finds himself questioning, not the sanity of Swedenborg, but the sanity of those who have gravely impeached his. He is at a loss to conceive of any standard of soundness and sobriety of mind tried by which the Swedish sage shall be found wanting. That his enunciations are often new, strange, and startling, he is indeed forced to admit, but the more they are pondered, the more clearly does he perceive their verisimilitude, their logical legitimacy, and the superiority of their claims to belief over the positions of the prevailing theology which array themselves against them. It is mainly perhaps in this antithetic survey of the old and the new dogmas that he becomes aware of the higher claims of the latter on the score of their congruity with reason and revelation. The first dawn of conviction that steals upon his mind, assuring him that he has at length met with a theology which is at the same time a philosophy, and that he is proffered a faith which does not require him to forego in any respect the decisions of his intellect, which



harmonizes with the results of science and re-echoes the voice of his moral intuitions, ushers in a new era to his experience and makes his bosom the seat of a delight to which he had been before a stranger.

Pre-eminent among the discoveries which he makes in this new field of dogmatic revelation is that of a doctrine of the Divine nature, and of the Holy Trinity, which he perceives at once to dissipate the fallacies of the received tenet on this head, and render that luminous and consistent, which was before dark and perplexing. The trifold distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is seen to stand forth in perfect harmony with the essential Unity of the Godhead, and this distinction is recognised as existing in the one undivided person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is clearly shown to be the veritable Jehovah of the Old Testament, the true object of worship in the ancient and most ancient churches, and who comprises within Himself the three grand principles of Love, Wisdom, and Operation, constituting the only basis of the Scriptural Trinity. On this view of the Divine nature, we can see how the Lord's advent in the flesh was a real *incarnation* of the Deity, while on every other we perceive nothing higher than the bare *adjunction* of the Divine to the Human in the person of our Lord, and are utterly at fault in the attempt to assign a reason why he might not have been the son of Joseph as well as of Mary. If, as ordinarily taught, His soul, or *inmost essence*, were derived from the virgin mother, and his Divinity be due to the conjunction of the Godhead with this human soul, what necessity for a departure from the established laws of generation in the mode of his ushering into the world? Could not this conjunction have been as well effected without the miraculous conception as with it? The truth is, this great fact is ignored and vacated in the prevalent doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. It is only in the system of Swedenborg that it is seen to rise to its due magnitude and moment. Christ had no human father because the Divine *Esse* was his father, which is but another form of saying that in him Jehovah became incarnate, or the Divine Love, the Father, was inwardly latent in the manifested and impersonated Divine Truth, the Son. On no other ground can the doctrine of a *real incarnation* be maintained. Abandon this,

and we sink at once to the level of a sheer Humanitarianism, which denies the very central truth of Christianity. If Jesus Christ be not the supreme and absolute Jehovah, to the exclusion of all personal distinctions, the Gospel is a fable.

The establishment of this truth is seen at once to put a new phasis on the entire scheme of doctrine pertaining to man's salvation. The dogma of vicarious atonement inevitably resolves itself into a theological fiction, for that tenet derives its very being from the assumption of three persons in the Godhead, the second of whom, by an expiatory sacrifice of Himself, makes a satisfaction to the vindicatory justice of the first, and that in reality, not in behalf of the whole world, but of a certain definite portion of the human race ascertained by an eternal decree of election. All this plausible and well-compacted theory falls prostrate to the ground as soon as it is perceived, as it soon will be by the student of Swedenborg, that God does not exist in three persons, but in one, and that an atonement made by one Divine person to Himself is a glaring absurdity. The foundation swept away, the superstructure topples down. To the clarified vision of the man of the New Church the entire fabric of the doctrinals of the old system passes over the stage as a solemn phantasmagoria, a spectral array of synodical and sacerdotal sanctities, which flit and disappear forever, as embodying any substantial truth.

As the doctrinal system of Swedenborg does away with the popular view of the atonement, while still affirming the indispensable necessity of the incarnation, so it puts also a new complexion upon the Lord's office of Mediator. It knows no more of his interceding *with* Himself than it does of his atoning *to* Himself. The views entertained on both these departments of his work, are necessarily governed by the paramount fact of the Divine Unity. This ruling truth of the New Church determines the sense of every declaration pertaining to the economy of redemption. As it is the one indivisible Jehovah, or the Word made flesh, who is presented to our view under the title of Christ or Lord, so every character, prerogative, and function ascribed to Him, must consist with that absolute oneness of person which constitutes the corner-stone and foundation of every doctrine of the New Jerusalem. Mediation and intercession, therefore, as predica-

ted of our Lord, in order to conform to the essential verity, must come before the mind divested of all idea of duality of person. The conception of one Divine Person, moved by infinite clemency, and pleading in behalf of sinful men with another Divine person who is prompted, but for such intervention, to inexorable wrath, is utterly alien to the system we are now considering. It knows no such conflict within the precincts of the bosom of boundless Love. The mediation of Jesus lies wholly in the fact of his being made a *medium* of the divine mercy and grace to men. The mediatorial pleadings are pleadings with men and not with God. It is man who requires to be reconciled to God, and not God to man.

The true teaching, not of Swedenborg simply, but of the Scriptures themselves, on this head will be found developed with extraordinary clearness in the seventeenth and eighteenth Lectures of the present volume, which we regard as a masterpiece of lucid and convincing exposition.

With the current doctrines of the Trinity, Atonement, Imputation, &c., stands most intimately connected that of Justification by Faith alone. And here again we are met in Swedenborg by a view of this subject completely at antipodes with the teaching of the Symbols. Instead of regarding Faith as the fundamental grace of the Christian soul, we are taught to recognise Charity as entitled to that distinction, and as Charity is but another name for Love, and Love for Life, we are furnished, in fact, with a psychological ground, for placing the essence of all true religion in the will-principle or the affection, instead of placing it in the intellect or faith-principle. As the very element of heavenly bliss consists in a form of character determined by the ruling love, and as this character must be inwrought and not merely imputed, we learn that a man, in order to be saved, must *be* good, and not merely *accounted* good, as his salvation and his character are one and the same thing. We are well aware, indeed, that it will be asserted that the same doctrine is taught in the orthodox standards, but we know, at the same time, that those standards and all the didactic theology framed according to them, make love the product of faith, instead of the reverse, and that the justifying efficacy of faith flows not from the essential *love*,

but from the appropriating *confidence*, involved in it. This, however, is, according to Swedenborg, a complete inversion of the true order of these principles, and his position cannot be gainsaid but by a refutation of his grand averment in regard to Love as the very *esse* of all intelligent being, and to Thought as its *existere*, or manifested form. While therefore, on his system all *merit* is entirely precluded on the part of man, yet it is maintained that *works*, considered as an exponent of the *ruling love*, and a synonym for *life*, are the ground of justification in this world, and the criterion of judgment in the next.

These and their various related themes constitute the subject matter of the present volume, and nowhere else, to our knowledge, are they treated with more signal ability or more exemplary fairness. The venerable author has been long known as a distinguished advocate and expounder of the great truths of the New Jerusalem, that last dispensation destined to bless the earth after the errors and commotions of the by-gone ages. His work entitled, "an Appeal in behalf of the views of the Eternal World, and State, and the Doctrines of Faith and Life, held by the body of Christians who believe that a New Church is signified by the New Jerusalem (in Revelations, ch. xxi.)," has ever been regarded, by the members of that Church, as the most powerful plea which has been put forth in illustration and defence of its peculiar tenets. While no answer has ever been attempted to its arguments, thousands have been enabled to bear witness to the aid it has afforded them in the solution of the doubts and difficulties which the novitiate reader so frequently meets with in the outset of his inquiries. In the present work, devoted more especially to the consideration of the theological doctrines of the New Church, we meet with the marks of the same candid spirit, the same luminous train of discussion, the same deference to the authority of the Divine Word, which shine so conspicuously in its predecessor. The reader encounters no harsh denunciation of the errors of former systems, no disparagement of the force of counter arguments, no adroit evasion of the true point in debate, but every thing is fair, manly, and direct, and the appeal to revelation, in its unforced teachings, as confident as it is constant. Distinguished by a peculiar felicity in

developing all the salient points of the system which he unfolds, and master of all the learning requisite to a clear confirmation of its verities, the author is no less happy in the indication of the meek and placid spirit which beautifies truth, and which makes the cause attractive that his reasoning makes strong.

We rejoice that the New Church has been honoured by the production of such a work. We rejoice that by the liberality of an individual deeply impressed with the value of the truth it inculcates, it has been made accessible to the American public at an earlier date and on a wider scale, than could have been anticipated under other circumstances. It is devoutly to be hoped that the same impulse which has led to its publication may prompt also to its diffusion. It can be of use only so far as it is read, and we have but too much reason to fear that on the part of multitudes who would be benefitted beyond measure by the perusal, the call for the work will not be spontaneous. It must be freely furnished them ; it must be put in their way ; it must be commended to their attention ; and in order to this the friends of the New Church must be willing, even at some little apparent sacrifice for the present, to possess themselves, in the volume now published, of the means of rendering an invaluable service to their neighbor. Indeed, we are persuaded that the members of the New Church are called to higher measures of liberality on this score, founded on a large and believing trust in the Divine Providence, than they have as yet evinced. Nor do we doubt that they will respond to this call whenever they shall give full force to the assurance, that, however precious these heavenly doctrines are to themselves, they will be equally so to thousands of others when, by their agency, they shall have been made acquainted with them.

G. B.

# P R E F A C E

TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

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THE following work sufficiently explains itself; and as the first Lecture, with the commencing portions of several of the others, is of a Prefatory character, all that seems requisite by way of Preface, here, is to give some account of its origin and composition, with the cause of its publication. This may at the same time serve as an apology for some of the defects of which the Author is conscious.

In the course of the twenty-eight years during which the Author has laboured in the Ministerial Office, and has endeavoured to recommend to his fellow-men the Views of Divine truth which are presented in this Volume, he has delivered numerous Lectures, in various parts of the kingdom, both single and in series, for the promotion of that object. Among them was a Course—twenty-six in number,—delivered at and after the opening of the Church in Cross street, chiefly in the first half of the year 1828. These at the time, the Author was much solicited to commit to the press; but he declined to do so, partly because he thought there was no lack of doctrinal Lectures embracing similar subjects, then recently published, by other labourers in the same field; and partly because two works of some magnitude, in advocacy and defence of the same system of Scripture-interpretation and doctrine as was maintained in those Lectures, had not long before been published by himself. But when, fifteen years afterwards,—that is about three years ago,—an application was made to him from the Society long since formed in Manchester (under the auspices

of the late Rev. J. Clowes, Rector of St. John's in that town) for the publication of the Writings of the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg and of other works in agreement with the same,—the purport of which application was, that he would allow them to print a volume of the Lectures which he was known to have in manuscript, to extend to about 500 pages,—he deemed that time had removed all reasons to the contrary. A second edition of his *Appeal*, &c., had, indeed, been printed in the year 1838, into which he had incorporated some of the Lectures of the year 1828. But by omitting these, with all the Lectures of that Series which treated of the Resurrection and the Life after Death,—a subject which is so largely discussed in the *Appeal*—he thought that in the fifteen which remained, with such others as it might be necessary to introduce to bring the Work to the requisite completeness and the contemplated extent, the subjects, though including some of those which are considered in the *Appeal*, would be found to be treated so differently, as not to be felt as tedious in the perusal, even by those who have read that work; whilst any further satisfaction which might be desired respecting those subjects might there be obtained.

The object of the Author, in this Volume, has been, to present, in a popular form, something like a Sketch of a small Body of True Christian Divinity; but as he could not introduce all the subjects which ought to appear in such a work, and was compelled to exclude the great one of the Resurrection, &c., he has only designated it, *Important Doctrines of the True Christian Religion*. He has, however, endeavoured so to arrange the various subjects, as that the Work should form a coherent whole, and present a regular thread of discussion from beginning to end. But being formed of parts not all composed at the same time, nor originally designed to



range together, differences of style, and in the manner of treating the subjects, will be easily detected. There is, however, not a sentence in the book, whether here printed for the first time or not [and of the latter, beside the last Lecture, this is very little indeed], which does not owe its birth to the same pen as the rest, with the exception of some portions of Lecture XXVI., as explained in the proper place.

From the same cause—of the component parts of the work having been written at different times, and the whole being printed from the original manuscripts,—there is a want of uniformity in the use of capital letters, and in some other little technicalities. In the former part of the Work, also the references to the passages cited from Scripture are frequently, by oversight, omitted.

The fifteen Lectures of the Series of 1828, which are the foundation of the Work, are numbered in it as follows: Lectures I., II., III., V., VII., VIII., IX., XI., XII., XIV., XVI., XXI. [first eight pages], and XXII. [six or seven pages in the middle], XXIII., XXVI., and XXVII. The others were composed at different periods between the year 1822 and the present time. The chief part of the Lecture on Mediation in the Series of 1828, had been introduced into the second edition of the *Appeal*. But this was a subject which could not be omitted in the present Series; yet there was some difficulty in supplying it, without its wearing too great a resemblance to the original Lecture, now forming Part 3 of Section viii. in that work. This inconvenience was the cause that Lecture XVII., in this Volume, is rather a disjointed performance. The Author used the original introduction, wrote some original observations on the common doctrine, then stated the true doctrine [partly in quotations from Lecture X.,] and added some illustrations from Sermons composed in

1837. But when he had thus completed the Lecture, he was by no means satisfied; and his mind having now become active upon the subject, and feeling its great importance, he composed the entirely new Lectures, XVIII., XIX., and XX.

But although the widely distant intervals at which some portions of the volume were written must have occasioned varieties of style and manner, the Author hopes that no dislocation will be observable in the order of the various subjects; and he has been careful to insert connecting clauses and references, where required, to render the whole one continuous work. But he fears he shall have justly incurred more critical censure, for having retained so much of the prefatory and apologetical matter with which most of the Lectures of the year 1828 were introduced. They were delivered before numerous auditoria, to most of the individuals composing which everything presented was entirely new: consequently, it was necessary to commence with such exertions as might tend to allay prejudice and conciliate a favourable attention. As, also, they were delivered at weekly intervals, and persons were always present who had not attended previously, it was necessary to recite, from time to time, the substance of what had gone before, and which was the basis of what was to follow. These apologetical and recapitulatory introductions, therefore, might be very necessary to the Lectures as delivered; but on perusing them in rapid succession, since the sheets have been all worked off, to ascertain what *Errata* might have escaped attention in the proofs, the Author could not but feel that, *thus read*, the effect of the repetitions was unpleasant. He has therefore added, to the *Errata*, a direction for some omissions as *Corrigenda*: to which the reader may add as many more as his taste suggests.

With these explanations, and acknowledged consciousness of faults, the Work is submitted to the favourers of the views of Divine Truth which it advocates, and to the candid attention of the public at large. All that the Author wishes from its publication is, that it may be made conducive, by the good providence of the Lord, to the extension of genuine Christian faith and practice : and should it be blessed to the building up of only a few in the vital principles of the True Christian Religion, he shall consider that his prayers have been answered, and that he has obtained the best of rewards.

*Kentish Town, June 19, 1846.*



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# LECTURE I.

## INTRODUCTORY.

THE DUTY OF PROCLAIMING, AND THE BLESSEDNESS OF RECEIVING, THE DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH SIGNIFIED BY THE NEW JERUSALEM IN THE REVELATION ; ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATING TO THE PERSON OF THE LORD AND HIS SECOND ADVENT.

*Being the Substance of two Discourses, delivered, respectively, at the Opening of the New Jerusalem Church in Cross-street, Hatton Garden, London, December 30th, 1827, and of the New Jerusalem Church in Summer Lane, Birmingham, March 28th, 1830.*

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REV. XXI. 3.

*“ And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them ; and they shall be his people ; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”*

You have witnessed this day, my friends and brethren, a solemnity, which probably differs essentially from anything that many of you have ever witnessed before. It is, indeed, nothing unusual for persons holding religious sentiments of any kind whatever, to provide buildings for united worship. It is not unusual, either, among Christians, and all who use particular edifices for their religious celebrations, to consecrate them to that object by some especial kind of sacred service. That we then, who call ourselves Christians of the New Jerusalem, should, by the same kind of service, solemnly set apart this building to the worship of the Lord, cannot, by itself, be regarded as very extraordinary. But



that we should dedicate it solely to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Only God of heaven and earth, and thus the Only Being in the universe who is entitled to the honours of worship; and further, that we should declare, in the Address at the opening of the service, that we believe that he is fulfilling the prophecies of his own mouth and word by making his second advent: these are things which may probably have appeared to some of you a little surprising.

But do not start at these opinions, nor regard us, merely for holding them, as the victims either of credulity or of enthusiasm. We conceive that we have reasons for our belief on these points, —sound, scriptural reasons,—which no gainsayers can overturn, and the validity of which must be allowed by pure reason itself. Indeed, why should any one start with wonder at either of these assertions? Permit me, with all deference, to ask, How can any one who believes the Lord Jesus Christ to be really God, be surprised at hearing it declared, that He is the Only God of heaven and earth? Does not the creed of all Christian Churches affirm, in the strongest terms, the unity of God? Is not the language of Divine Inspiration, from one end to the other of the Sacred Record, “Ye shall not have other gods before me?”—“I am God, and there is none else?” Does not reason start, not merely with surprise, but with horror, at the idea of there being more gods than one? Does not every Christian steadily affirm that there is one God and no more, and profess that, in making the assertion, the sentiments of his heart fully accord with the declaration of his lips? Then, if Jesus Christ possess the attribute of Divinity, there is no God but he: If he is God at all, he is the Only God: and whosoever, believing his Divinity, starts at this statement, confesses, by his surprise, that his thought contradicts his words, and that in his heart he believes in more Gods than one. It were well if you, and all professing Christians, would examine yourselves by this test. If you feel any repugnance in your hearts on hearing it asserted that Jesus Christ is the Only God, you may justly suspect there is something wrong in your previously formed opinions: consider, then, how serious a concern it must be, to hold a contradictory creed on the very first principle of religious faith and doctrine! And is it possible that any Christians should be afraid to trust their

salvation to Jesus Christ alone? Is he less qualified to be a Saviour for being truly, as he declares in the Revelation that he is, "THE ALMIGHTY?" Is there any Saviour beside him? Is it not He then who says, in Isaiah, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else?"

It is not, however, my intention to enter into the proof of this grand doctrine now: it will form the subject of some of our subsequent Lectures. But in the first sermon preached in this place\* as now restored to its original destination, and on occasion of its dedication, anew, to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only God of heaven and earth; also, as introductory to the Lectures which are to follow; I could not but mention this cardinal truth of all pure doctrine, and speak a word of that testimony of Jesus which is the spirit of prophecy.

Before, however, I quit for the present, this momentous subject, let me warn you against supposing that there are any real obstacles, either in reason or Scripture, to the belief of the sole divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me intreat you, at least, to suspend your judgment for the present. We consider ourselves fully able to prove, and hope, by divine grace and assistance, to do so hereafter, that the purest reason, the truest philosophy, instead of opposing the belief that it was the Eternal Jehovah himself who assumed Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, give all their suffrages in favor of that miracle of mercy, when the real nature of it is understood. It is only in consequence of conceiving utterly false notions respecting it, that the pride of short-sighted man, and the shallowness of his reason while darkened by the fallacies of sense, pronounce it impossible. Only allow Jehovah to be Infinite Love and Infinite Power; and then ask, whether there is any thing either too great or too hard for Him to do for the salvation of his immortal creatures: and allow Him to be Infinite Order, likewise, and then, perhaps, you may admit it to be possible, that the salvation of man could not have been effected, but by Jehovah's assuming Humanity for the purpose.

Nor let the humble disciple of the Scriptures suppose, that there is anything in those Holy Records inconsistent with the

\* The Church in Cross Street, London. It was originally built by two individuals, retaining their property, and was eventually purchased by the Society.

glorious truths, that there is one God, that there is none else, and that Jesus Christ is He. Fancy not that, in holding this doctrine, we deny the Trinity : we do not deny the Trinity, but we establish it, and we show that this great mystery, as it is commonly deemed, requires no suppression of the voice of reason before it can be received, and that it is men, not God, who have made it incomprehensible. We preserve, and maintain, every truth of the Bible ; every truth that is dear to the heart of a Christian : and we show that the pure truths of Scripture, are the dictates of the purest reason also ; that although reason, in its present feeble state, is incapable of discovering them, it recognises and rejoices in them when presented before it. In short, we boldly affirm, that the view of the Scriptures, of religion, and of its great doctrines, held by us, is the only system which is impregnable to the shafts of Scepticism ; and it is high time that it should be more extensively promulgated, known and received, to put a check to the progress of Infidelity, which now rears so audacious a front, and marches with such desolating strides through the realms of Christendom ; demoralizing by its influence the human character, debasing the man into the brute, and excluding the immortal from the eternal happiness intended for him by creation. Christians must clothe themselves in that panoply of Divine Truth which makes the acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only God of heaven and earth, its helmet of salvation, or Christianity itself will be merged, first, with many, in Unitarianism, and then, with all, in Deism and Atheism : religion will be banished from the earth : and without religion, which binds man, the recipient of life to his Creator, its Source, the human race itself would finally drop out of existence. So true is the declaration of the Divine Prophet, that unless those days,—the days of evil and error in a consummated church,—be shortened, there should no flesh be saved—either spiritually or naturally.

Fear not then, ye men of reason ! to put your trust in a God who assumed and glorified in himself the nature of man, that he might dispense, in a manner more accommodated to the capacities of his frail human offspring, the graces which purify and dignify the heart, and which bring with them to the subjects of

them the inestimable gift of salvation : and imagine not, ye disciples of the gospel ! that your Saviour would be less capable of saving you if he were the sole God of the universe, if omnipotence itself were his, if to him truly belong all power in heaven and in earth. All that I have now asserted, will, by the mercy of the Lord, be fully proved, in our future Lectures. And O ! what is the delight and peace which the reception of this view brings into the soul ! To be satisfied, on the one hand, that religion is true, —that there is a God, and that he makes his creature man the object of his care ; that he has revealed to him his will, and provided for him the means of attaining eternal happiness ; and, on the other, to be relieved from all perplexity as to the nature and person of this most blessed God and Saviour, to have the revelation of his will made clear to us, and to be taught by it explicitly what the means of attaining eternal happiness are :—O what felicity is this for an anxious, trembling, suffering, aspiring mortal ; the creature, if this life be all, of an hour ; the partaker, if the Word of God is to be believed, of life without end ; the inheritor, if he complies with the will of his Heavenly Father, of an eternal and exceeding weight of glory !

But I observed, also, at the beginning of this discourse, that many of you would probably be surprised to hear, that we believe that the Lord is fulfilling the prophecies of his own mouth and word by making his second advent. But, as I asked respecting both propositions, why should any one start with wonder at hearing this belief ? Is prophecy never to be accomplished ? Is the Word of God, as to many of the prophetic parts of it, to say nothing of other parts, to remain a dead letter for ever ? If *not*, where is the absurdity of believing, that an event which the Christian world has been expecting, almost from year to year, for these seventeen hundred years past ; which they all, without exception, are looking for at no distant period now ; which none of the expositors of Scripture expect to be delayed any very long time further ; which some of the most popular and admired proclaim to be quite close at hand—where is the absurdity of supposing, that an event which all agree must come, should, at last, actually have arrived ; especially when it fulfils, by the unexpected manner of its arrival, the Lord's own warning. In such an

hour as ye think *not*, the Son of Man cometh? "Indeed!" many will exclaim, "but where is He? The heavenly luminaries rise and set as usual; and the earth has not yet been consumed, as expected, by the falling of the sun and the stars to the ground. The clouds float over our heads as of old; and we have not yet seen appear in them the sign of the Son of Man?" And is it, my friends, in this manner that we ought to expect the Lord to make his second advent? Is it to lead the Jews back to Canaan that he will appear, and will he become to them, at last, precisely such a Messiah as they wished for at first, to reward them for having refused to accept him in any other manner, and for having rejected and crucified him when he came in a manner which they did not approve? Surely, it is they who entertain such notions as these about the Lord's second coming that are the enthusiasts. To believe that he ever *will* come, or that he ever *intended* to come, or meant to *promise* to come, in such a manner as this, argues a copious share of credulity indeed, and an equal lack of just conception respecting the nature of his divine person and government: but to believe that he comes in a manner worthy of Himself; that he never intended to come, a second time, in any other than a spiritual manner; and to see that the language in which his promises respecting his advent are given, interpreted in the way in which the whole Word of God proves that such language is to be interpreted, teaches that his coming is to be such as we announce;—such a belief exposes him who holds it to no just reproach, but shows that he has views respecting the Lord and his mode of dealing with mankind, which tend to exalt him according to his true character, and to impress on his creatures the feelings of veneration and love. Yes, my brethren, accept just views, I entreat you, respecting the nature of the Lord's second advent, and do not go on expecting it, you and your children, for ages yet to come, in a manner in which it will never take place; just as the Jews are expecting his first advent, in a manner equally far from its true nature, to the present day. Look deliberately at the considerations which we have to offer on this subject, and which will be more fully detailed in the course of our subsequent ministrations, before you do yourselves and us such injustice as to reject them.

Connected with the Second Coming of the Lord, is the introduction of a new dispensation of gospel-truth and love : and this is what is specifically spoken of in our text, which it is time that we should proceed to notice, as the establishment of the tabernacle of God among men.

Allow me, then, on this subject, to observe, that it is the opinion of all, except some miserable sceptics,—and it is the general opinion because the Scriptures declare it and the traditions of all ancient nations confirm the testimony,—that man really was, in the primeval ages, an image and likeness of God, and lived in a blissful state upon earth. Can we doubt, that what man was created to be at first, it is the will of God that he should be still, and, if he refuses to comply with the plan of his Maker in one age and period, that the Providence of Infinite, long-suffering, unwearied Love, would still watch over and attend him, striving to bring him back, as far as can be done without destroying his very nature, to order and purity, to perfection and bliss,—to be an image and likeness of God again? We cannot stop now to go into an inquiry respecting the cause of man's declension, or the origin of evil: we may be sure that there must be something in the constitution of man, and inseparable from his nature as a creature formed with the capacity of being an image and likeness of God, which left him liable to fall if he chose what caused it. Whether the ultimate well-being of the human race on earth,—the greatest good of which a being created with such faculties is capable,—could have been attainable without the permission of the evil that has existed, we need not enquire: but we are sure that the aim of the Divine Providence must be, again to bring man into a state of high attainment in goodness and happiness on earth. The Lord desires that man should yet again be, an image and likeness of God. It may still be a long time before the intractableness of corrupt human nature may permit the benevolent designs of Infinite Goodness to take their full effect. But the eye must be blind indeed, which does not discern, in the changes which are taking place throughout the world in the present day, in the altered character, as it would even appear, of the human mind itself, and the boundless improvements which are every where going on to amend the condition of society, that

a hidden influence from the Father of mercies is operating upon mankind. Great judgments, indeed, have been abroad in the earth ; as divine prophecy announced would be the case ; and severe suffering is now experienced : but these are but as the throes of the world, in giving birth to a state of permanent improvement ; as the mystical woman clothed with the sun, seen by John in the Revelation, " being with child, cried, travailing in birth ; and pained to be delivered." The signs of the times, in this respect, are so visible, that they are the subject of perpetual observation and remark. That we are living in a most extraordinary era of the world, is the conviction of all. The philosopher, the statesman, the divine, all are perpetually 're-echoing the acknowledgment. Yes, my brethren ! the observation is most true : and the change which is taking place in so many different ways, is, we fear not to assert, the effect of the Lord's making his second advent, not in a natural, but in a spiritual manner. The errors that have obscured true Christianity, and the evils which have destroyed it, will, gradually, be removed with many. In lieu of the mistaken doctrines which have so long usurped the name of the truths of the gospel, such as all those relating to, and springing out of, the division of the Godhead into three separate persons, will be established, with many, the pure truths of the gospel themselves, all which centre in the cardinal point of the Unity of the Godhead and the concentration of the Trinity in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, producing the corresponding fruits of piety and true holiness. In one word, a pure Christian Church will arise and extend, in which will be restored, in greater abundance than ever, the means of salvation, and men will again rise, in increasing numbers, to the true dignity of their nature, becoming images and likenesses of God. We may not live to see much of this take effect ; and it even may not extend very far in another generation : that which is to be lasting is commonly slow : but the signs are palpable which assure us that the work is begun ; and the prophecies of Scripture declare to us that it will go on, and that the heavenly Jerusalem,—a pure Christian Church,—will be eventually established on the earth.

I have taken as a text the passage read at the commencement of the discourse, not because I think it exactly applicable to the



erecting or dedicating of this house for worship,—not because I mean to say, that any material building is the tabernacle of God with men,—for no such building, since the age of types and representations has passed away, can properly claim this honour : but because the passage is applicable to the subject we are contemplating,—the second coming of the Lord to tabernacle, after a spiritual manner, with men, raising up a pure Christian Church, and manifesting himself therein as the One God in his Glorified Human Person, in which his name is Jesus Christ.

“ I heard,” says the favoured Seer, “ a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” The whole Scripture or Word of God contains a spiritual sense, totally distinct from the literal, though contained within it, as the soul resides in the body : and it may be understood by a knowledge of a certain regular analogy or correspondence, by which spiritual and mental things constantly answer to certain natural and material ones : on which subject we shall be more particular at future opportunities. The tabernacle of God is representative of the Church, in which alone it is that the Lord dwells with men,—not the church as composed of a house or building, but the Church as consisting in divine truths and graces received in the hearts and minds of the true worshippers of the Lord. That which is here called, by the voice of heaven, the tabernacle, is called, in the preceding verse, the holy city, New Jerusalem, which John says he saw coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband : which, again, is another representation of a new state of the Christian Church. In this tabernacle, our text says, God will dwell with men : but how ? As the tabernacle, or the city Jerusalem seen to descend in vision, does not mean literally a tabernacle or city, so the dwelling of God therein does not mean his dwelling in any local habitation in person. The way in which God is to dwell with his people, and in his tabernacle or church, is, by his Spirit ; not, again, by his Spirit as a person, but by the influence of the life of his love and wisdom, operating saving graces in the hearts of those who receive it, and renewing them into his image and

likeness. Such being their state as to their hearts and souls, it is said further, that "they shall be *his people*," an endearing phrase, often used in the Holy Word in reference to those real servants of the Lord who are made his children by the reception of his truth as the guide of all their conduct: and when it is said in addition, "and God himself shall be with them, and be their God," it implies a reciprocal state of conjunction with the Lord, He imparting to them the life of his Divine Truth, and they receiving it with supreme veneration, and exalting it to the highest place in their affections. *That* is called a person's god, in Scripture, in the spiritual sense, which forms his governing end and motive, to which all his thoughts and affections spontaneously turn: how excellent, then, how truly orderly, is that state, respecting which it is said, that God himself shall really be the God of his people, the absolute object of their supreme and constant regards, the inmost centre of their hearts and souls? We call the Lord our God, because we have learned, from Scripture and doctrine, that He is the supreme Ruler and Proprietor of all things, and ought, therefore, to be venerated by us with devout adoration and humble love: but whatever profession we may make, he actually is not our God, in the emphatic style of Scripture, unless he really does reign through all our heart and mind; unless we constantly and spontaneously make Him the ultimate end of all our thoughts, aims, affections and actions; unless all the interiors of the soul constantly turn towards Him as their proper life and centre. Thus an actual conjunction of life is effected between man and his God; God continually presenting to man the riches of his grace, and man receiving them, appropriating them, and referring them again to their all-merciful Author, in devout acknowledgment and grateful adoration.

But there is one particular, here, which points out *who* the God is that will thus bless his people. It is not only said, that He will be their God, as is the customary form of promises of this kind in the Old Testament, but it is said, more fully, that God himself shall be *with them*, and be their God. Now who is he that is described in Scripture, as God *with man*, God *with them*, or, in the title solemnly given him, the meaning of which is precisely the same, *God with us*. As Matthew says, applying

the old prophecy of Isaiah to the birth of Jesus, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." It is, then, in his character as Immanuel, that the heavenly voice declares in our text that God himself shall be with them; and Immanuel is the God *we* worship,—the Infinite Jehovah clothed with a glorified or Divine Humanity,—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, concentrated in the single Divine Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

According, then, to the passage before us, we find, that a state is to arrive *in this world*, when the presence of the Lord with his people, who will be restored again to his image and likeness, is to be experienced in an eminent manner. There are yet happy times, we see, the result of the reception of grace and goodness from the Lord, in store for the inhabitants of the earth. I say, for the inhabitants of the earth, for the symbolic holy city, New Jerusalem, is said to descend from God *out of heaven*, and the tabernacle of God, it is declared, shall be with *men*: most vain and idle then are the dreams of those who imagine, that the vision of the New Jerusalem is only a representation of the happiness of saints in heaven;—a fancy which, as it was of late introduction, has now again lost credit with most of the expositors. Yes, my friends, we may be assured of it: the blessings of which our text is descriptive; the good and happiness spiritually signified when it is said that the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, even the blessed Immanuel, and be their God,—the blessings thus promised are to be yet enjoyed by the long bewildered, long straying creatures of the human race. The time *must* come, for Divine Truth has declared it: and why may not the approach of it be dawning on us now? Can it do us any harm to believe so;—so long, that is, as we have purely spiritual ideas of its nature, and do not, as is too common with others, cherish any fanatical expectations of external changes and wonders? Can it do us any harm to be persuaded, that the tabernacle of God is, even now, spiritually appearing among men, and to strive, in consequence, to become of the number of that people, as already described, with whom, alone, God can dwell.

One thing, at least, I apprehend, all will acknowledge ; which is, that *we*, who have received an undoubting conviction of these things, would be sadly wanting in our duty if we neglected to announce them as far as we have opportunity. The treasures of which we have partaken are too precious, and the sense which they inspire of the benefit of possessing them too overwhelming, to permit us to incur the responsibility of trying to enjoy them in secret. In truth, we cannot but earnestly desire, that what we find so delightful and beneficial to ourselves should be enjoyed by others,—that multitudes of our fellow-creatures should be introduced within the walls of that Holy City, where we behold so bright a light to shine, such heavenly beatitudes to abound, and so beneficent a King to reign. We cannot contrast the divine and soul-reviving splendours which glow *within*, with the darkness which,—pardon my Christian freedom for saying it—prevails *without* ; and not be inflamed with the desire to be instrumental in transferring the wanderers in the latter to the security of the former. We cannot contemplate the cloud—pardon again the sincerity that I am constrained to use,—which overspreads the world called Christian in respect to the Object of Christian worship ; we cannot behold our fellow creatures, bearing the name of Christians, addressing their worship to three divine persons in succession, and thus departing from the precept of Jehovah when he says, “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me ;” and that of Jesus Christ which says, “Come unto *me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and *I* will give you rest ;”—and we cannot think at the same time of the meridian clearness in which, in the doctrines of the New Church, the Lord Jesus Christ is set forth as the Christian’s God, *in* whose person is the Father, and *from* whose person proceeds the Holy Spirit,—who alone is able to heal all manner of spiritual sickness, and all manner of spiritual disease, and to feed all the multitudes who follow him with true spiritual food, even his own flesh and blood, which are Divine Love and Wisdom :—we cannot draw this contrast, and not earnestly desire to withdraw our fellow-creatures from their obscure view and erroneous worship, and conduct them to the clear and the true. We cannot reflect on the certain manner in which, in the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, the

path to the seats of bliss is opened to our advancement ; we cannot behold therein all the discrepancies which other sentiments suppose between the law and the gospel removed ; we cannot hear again the Divine Saviour declaring, that "the first of all the commandments is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength ; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ;" and hear him say further, "This do, and thou shalt live ;" we cannot hear him affirm, in addition, that the conditions of discipleship with Him are the same,—“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me : and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father ; and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him :” we cannot reflect on the manner in which all this is perverted,—I must take leave to say so,—in the doctrines commonly prevailing, in which people have the dangerous sentiment instilled into their minds that they cannot keep the law of God, and thus are naturally led to desist from trying to keep it, being persuaded that they may be saved without it :—we cannot contemplate all this, without again desiring to lead our brethren out of the entanglements of error into the straight path of pure and genuine truth. So, again, look at the glories which are set before our eyes, within the walls of the tabernacle of God, in the unfolding of the spiritual sense of the Holy Word. How does the Word of God now become to us the Word of God indeed, everywhere filled with the wisdom of God, and thus seen to be worthy of the fountain from which it flowed, and of the plenary divine inspiration by which it was written ! Here are treasures indeed for the soul that has a longing for true spiritual riches, and is in quest of the pearl of great price ! And how immense does their importance become when contrasted with the notions of the Word of God entertained by those who are unconscious of its containing a spiritual sense, and are content to wander over the surface of the sacred field, without concerning themselves about the treasures hid in that field ! What low notions of all its contents then universally prevail, insomuch that none can really view it (and in these days few profess to view it) as written by an entire inspiration ! How then can we fail, if we feel what we believe, to seek the

opportunity of speaking of these treasures to our fellow-creatures ! To touch only on one more of the advantages which we have to offer to our brother immortals in the doctrines of the New Jerusalem :—for who can close even the slightest enumeration of them without adverting to the manner in which the eternal world, its reality, its glories, and its immediate nearness, are in those doctrines displayed before our eyes ? We know that this world is only a training place for heaven ;—that we are sent here for a season to prepare us for a home in eternity,—to make up our state (awful consideration !) and to acquire a fixity in the form of our spirit, to qualify it for living afterwards an imperishable life for ever. We know that we enter on this imperishable life immediately after death, without any interval of suspense or insensibility ; that we rise into the eternal world as men,—as human beings endowed with every sense and faculty belonging to men, but in a much more perfect state than can be given here ; that heaven then stands before us, containing all that can add to the happiness of intelligent beings, into which we shall enter, if we have made that use of our day of probation here for which it is given, and, in the presence of our God, shall go on advancing in wisdom, love, and blessedness, for ever. Our ideas also of the nature of the dark world, (though we will not dwell on that subject now,) are such as to convince us that such a state exists, and that it is beyond conception wretched ; while the useful warning hence arising is supplied with all that should be necessary to make it efficacious, when we know, that it is ready to swallow up the wicked immediately after death. Here are ideas which give the eternal world reality in our estimation, and which, to those who so live as to be prepared for it, strip death of its terrors : whereas, on these subjects, how dark are the views generally prevailing ! Even to the best of men, how horrible is death, when accompanied with the notion, that there is no real resurrection till the body comes to life again, no one knows when. Does not this tend to fix the thoughts, when contemplating the change made by death, not upon heaven, but upon the tomb ? With such apprehensions, does not man look upon the grave, as, what it is often denominated, his *long home* ? With what gloom and horror are such conceptions filled ! Then must not our

hearts burn to relieve our fellow-creatures from such dark apprehensions,—to call them to those views of the life hereafter which we find so consoling,—to raise the thoughts of immortal man from such dead imaginations—from dust and ashes, and worms, and the long night of the sepulchre—to living realities, to angelic life, and capacities, and enjoyments, and an immediate entrance on eternal glory ?

Such, brethren, are some of the views, by which, as we conceive, the doctrines of the True Christian Church, which we believe is signified by the New Jerusalem, recommend themselves to the attention both of the admirers of reason and the disciples of the Scriptures ; and which, as we believe, are now made known, in consequence of the time for the Lord's Second Advent, having arrived. Such views of Divine Truth, it surely will be admitted, are at least intitled to have their claims to acceptance fairly and dispassionately examined. Even were we to concede the possibility of our being in error in supposing the time to have arrived for the second coming of the Lord, and for the setting up of his tabernacle, as predicted in our text, among mankind, this would not detract from the intrinsic value of the truths we offer ; and such an error would be a very harmless one, since it could lead to no evils nor ill consequences in regard to life, practice, faith in the Lord, nor, consequently, salvation. Look, we beseech you, at the truths just propounded, and at those which will be developed in our subsequent Lectures ; yea, at all the principles comprised in the whole system of doctrine which we recommend, drawn, as they always are, from the Word of God, opened, as we believe, in consequence of the Lord's second advent : consider, deliberately and steadily, whether they be truths indeed : and if you find them such, you cannot think we are much mistaken as to the means by which we came possessed of them. But look, especially, at the proper and obvious tendency of our doctrines. They may, indeed, be professed in words, where they are not admitted into the heart ; but consider what their natural effect, if received in the heart and made the guide of life, must be upon the mind, temper, and conduct. Examine whether they tend to make those who accept them more dutiful to God, more just to man ; to root out the evil

passions, the unhallowed lusts, grounded in self-love and the love of the world, which make the bosom that cherishes them a torment to itself and a pest to others,—which tend to unhinge the whole fabric of human society, to make the world, which God created as a terrestrial paradise, an image of the regions beneath,—and to render mankind, whom God designed to be a family of brethren,—a school as of innocent children training for maturity in heaven, the images of the inhabitants of the dens of darkness, yea, actual demons themselves. See whether the effect of these truths, received with sincerity and affection, is likely to be, the re-establishment in the heart of the graces which are the opposites of these pernicious vices; to make the love of God and the love of our neighbour the ruling principles of the life and conduct; to bring, as the inseparable attendants of these celestial guests, peace, tranquillity, contentment of mind; to heal the disorders which man's destructive passions have introduced into the world around him, and to restore, in proportion to the universality of their acceptance in the heart, the image of heaven upon earth. O! my brethren, what was man made for? What could he be made for, rational, immortal and accountable, as he confessedly is,—but to be, what the Divine Record declares he originally was,—an image and likeness of God? What is God, whose image and likeness man was created to be? God is life, and the source of it: and hence man has life as a recipient from the Infinite Source; not life in himself, or that he is life itself, as God is, and none but God can be; but derivative life, or life received by perpetual communication from its inexhaustible fountain. But so are the beasts recipients of life; it is not therefore by the reception of life alone, independently of its quality and the mode of its activity, that man is an image of his Maker. But God is Eternal: and man is immortal by derivation from God's eternity: that is, having once begun to receive life from the Infinite Source, he continues to receive it without end, because, in its Source, it is eternal. But man can, and often does, and this throughout his immortality, employ or apply his life in contrariety to his Maker: whence, again, we see, that it is not the mere capacity of life eternal that makes man an image of God. The life of every being whatever is nothing but the acti-



vity of his moral qualities : and the life of the Lord is the activity of his moral qualities, which are love and wisdom, goodness and truth : Yea : these attributes form the very essence of his nature : He is love itself and wisdom itself,—good itself and truth itself. To be an image and likeness of God, is, then, to be a recipient of the love and wisdom of God ;—a being in whom pure love and wisdom, originating in infinite love and wisdom, form the very principles of the life, and determine the constitution of the mind. This, my brethren, is what man was made for : this is the state to which, our doctrines teach us, he is to strive to return : and what a glorious, what a happy being would he form, were this the manner in which his mind were constituted and determined ;—if he had no feelings in his bosom but what own love and goodness as their parent ; no thoughts in his mind but what are forms and expressions of real wisdom and truth ; and yet both his feelings and his thoughts were ever in strong expansion and activity, his heart always overflowing with warm affections, his intellect always teeming with vivid conceptions ! How happy would it be to live in society with such companions ! How great would be the stock of happiness in the world, if all acted from the dictates of these holy principles ! Inherent in the principles themselves are the very springs of delight : and how immense would be the amount produced, if all were ever aiming, as their love would ever prompt them to do, to communicate delight and good to others ! It is not the grasping, but the giving principle, that happiness dwells in. Such is the nature of society in heaven : for, there, all are images and likenesses of God : and earth would be an image of heaven, if such were the principles that influenced men here. Such, we are assured by the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, it must be our endeavour to become on earth : and in proportion as the love of the Lord and our neighbour is thus established in our hearts, the tabernacle of God will be individually with us : we shall be His people, and God Himself will be with us, and be our God.

## LECTURE II.

THE NECESSITY OF RELIGION, AS CONSISTING IN THE KNOWLEDGE, LOVE AND WORSHIP OF THE LORD, FOR MAINTAINING THE CONNEXION BETWEEN MAN AND HIS MAKER.

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ISA. xxiv. 5, 6.

*"The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left."*

IN our opening Lecture, we adverted to several principal truths comprised in the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church; that is, the doctrines which we believe to be those of the true Christian Religion, the revival of which in the latter days, in greater clearness and glory than ever was witnessed in former ages, we believe to be signified by the New Jerusalem that was seen by John to descend from God out of heaven, as described in the two last chapters of the Revelation. Most of the truths then summarily propounded, I propose to elucidate in the present and some subsequent Lectures.

I would first observe, that Jerusalem, all Christian writers acknowledge, is frequently mentioned in the prophetic parts of Scripture, not to signify merely the city of that name formerly inhabited by the Jews, but the Church of the Lord, and often, specifically, the Church established at the Lord's first advent, and called, from the name under which He then appeared, the Christian Church. Evidently, then, a New Jerusalem, prophesied of after the Christian Church had commenced, and with circumstances which cannot possibly belong to a mere city of any kind;—a Jerusalem described by a Christian prophet as

descending from God out of heaven, and as being of the extraordinary dimensions of twelve thousand furlongs, that is, fifteen hundred miles, not only in length and breadth, but also in height ;—evidently, such a New Jerusalem most denote a new Christian Church,—or the Christian Church under a new manifestation of its pure and saving truths,—under a new dispensation of divine mercy and grace, vouchsafed from the Lord as his last and best gift to the favoured children of men. We are convinced, from numerous signs and evidences open to the observation of all, that the era thus prefigured is, at the present day, dawning upon mankind ; and that the truths of the pure Christian Religion, as they are to be received under this new dispensation of it, are now made known, and will by degrees, in the Lord's own time, find an extensive reception in the hearts and minds of men. We feel it therefore to be our duty to press on our fellow mortals, or rather our fellow immortals, the acceptance of these pure and glorious truths, and to lay them before the world through every channel that we can command for their diffusion. This has, accordingly, been done, in various ways, during several years past : and the consequence has been, that there now are numbers who acknowledge them, not only in this country, but in every country of Christendom upon the surface of the globe. But, as was to be expected, this has not been done without its meeting with opposition. As Christianity itself, at its first rise, is denominated, in the Acts of the Apostles, “a sect which is everywhere spoken against ;” as its Divine Author himself was denounced as one who “had a devil and was mad,” and his followers were pursued with every species of calumny and revilement ; so have diligent efforts been made to hold up to public scorn and abhorrence the doctrines now put forth anew as those of the true Christian Religion, together with the unoffending persons who have received them as such. Very extensive prejudice has thus been excited in the professing Christian world ; and many, I am fully persuaded, are thus influenced to turn away from our doctrines, who, if they rightly understood what they are, would receive them with joy as a precious boon from heaven. It is possible that some now present may thus have been led to look at our proceedings with a jealous eye and

to listen to our sentiments with distrust and suspicion. If so, lay aside, I intreat you, every such feeling from your minds, till you are fully enabled to judge for yourselves of the doctrines we have to offer. And, I would say to all, judge of those doctrines as persons of intelligence and sound judgment, exercising freely for the purpose the faculty of reason, the capacity of distinguishing between truth and error, which the God of all truth has graciously bestowed upon us all. Judge of them, not from their agreement or disagreement with any preconceived system of faith or doctrine, but from their agreement or disagreement with the dictates of the truth itself, as revealed in the scriptures, and understood by the exercise of your own rational faculty. I confess, what may tend to excite prejudice in some, that we believe the systems of doctrine at present prevailing throughout the Christian world to be all more or less erroneous, and *that* even in points which are fundamental. But what is there in this which should give offence to any individual? Are we, as the Apostle asks the Galatians, your enemies, because we tell you the truth, as we most sincerely believe? We are far from imputing blame to any one on account of the religious sentiments which he may entertain. Let those sentiments be ever so erroneous, they are not of his own invention; and, in very many cases, we are quite convinced, they are only held by him, because he has not had the opportunity of choosing between them and better. But even where it is otherwise, error in points of doctrine is not a ground for regarding any one with unkindness; though, alas! this sentiment has been too little received and acted upon in the professing Christian world, and persecution on account of difference in religious sentiment has been too generally and cruelly practised. Our doctrines, however, teach us better. They teach us to regard all mankind as our brethren, and to be wanting in charity towards no one, because we think him mistaken in his creed. They instruct us, that, in forming his divine judgments, God looketh not at the eyes or understanding (as it is expressed in his Word) but at the heart; and, where this is right with him, he rejects no one for his mistakes in opinion: and we believe that, what we are assured is the practice of our heavenly Father, ought to be ours, if we would be truly

his children. If then we are constrained, in delivering what we believe to be the truth, to speak of doctrines as erroneous, which some of you, perhaps, may highly esteem, be assured that we do it with no unkind feeling towards those who regard them as true. Bear with us then in love : and candidly weigh the sentiments which, in love, and with a real concern for your best interests, we offer as those of the true Christian Church, under the New Jerusalem Dispensation of its saving glories.

As stated in our last, it is proposed to deliver a Series of Lectures upon some of the most important truths of the pure Christian Religion, as the doctrines of the New Jerusalem present them to the understanding of the candidate for a blissful immortality. The subject which I have made choice of for the present occasion, and on which I made a very cursory observation in our last, is one of a very general yet very important nature : it is a subject, in our sentiments on which every sincere Christian must cordially unite with us ; though perhaps we can offer reasons for the truth, which we herein advocate in common with all the Christian world, which Christians in general are not aware of, and which place the great point to be established on the most evident and solid basis. With Christians then, in general, in this Lecture, I have no controversy : you all, if Christians, will go, on this occasion, heartily along with me : my object at present, is, to establish the common foundation of the Christian and of all true religion : and my controversy is only with Deists and Infidels ; with men who, while they profess to believe in a God, deny the revelation which He has made of Himself in his Word ; deem any particular knowledge of Him altogether unattainable, regard all actual love of Him as purely chimerical, and consider the worship of Him as superfluous and useless. In this latter respect, I am sorry to say, there are many who call themselves Christians that coincide in sentiment with the absolute deniers of Revelation, and who, if they join in the worship of their Creator at all, do so rather in compliance with the customs of Christian and civilized society, than from any conviction of its necessity and obligation. What I propose then to show, in this Lecture, according to the light which we derive from the Word of God as explained by the doctrines which we believe

to be those of the New Jerusalem, is this: *The Necessity of Religion, as consisting in the knowledge, love, and worship of the Lord, for the maintenance of the connexion between man and his Maker.*

As collateral with this proposition, and as arising out of it, it will follow, that the *nearness* of the connexion between man and his Maker, will be according to the purity of his religion, and thus according to the truth of his knowledge of the Lord, the ardour of his love for him, and the sincerity of his worship of Him. Be it likewise observed incidentally, that it will hence also follow, that, if the purity of religion should now, or at any period whatever, be in danger of failing among mankind, there can be nothing too great, or too extraordinary, for God to do, if He is in reality a God of love, in order to restore it; and we may rely upon it as a fact of the most positive certainty, that He will, or would, in such case, interfere for that purpose. It will, in addition, follow, further, that if the doctrines, which we receive as those of the New Jerusalem, teach the purest religion; if they communicate, with the utmost clearness, the true knowledge of God; if they tend to excite the most ardent love for his adorable perfections, and supply the strongest motives to the sincere worship of his most glorious Person; they must in reality be themselves from God, the result of a gracious interference of his goodness for the benefit of mankind, and worthy to be embraced by man with all confidence and thankfulness. Permit me, my dear friends all, to say, that such we esteem them, and therefore it is that we desire to recommend them to you, believing that we can no otherwise confer on you so great a good. But it is not my intention to insist on these points this evening. At present I shall confine myself to the proper subject of this Lecture,—the Necessity of Religion, as consisting in the knowledge, love and worship of the Lord, for the maintenance of the connexion between man and his Maker:

By *the connexion* between man and God, it is to be observed that we mean, more especially, that connexion which is proper to man as a man, and which may more accurately be denominated conjunction, being what is commonly, but improperly, termed union. Men having no religion whatever, are, it is true, but too

frequently to be met with ; and, what is apparently very extraordinary, they are far more numerous in countries called Christian than among any sort of heathens whatever. But, without connexion with God, who is the Only Fountain of life, nothing whatever could exist for a single moment: consequently, even the total absence of religion, proceeding to the denial of the being of a God, as it does not deprive a man of existence, does not separate him from all connexion with the neglected Author of his being. So, again, animals are incapable of religion altogether: yet they live, and *that* from God, and by virtue of a certain degree of connexion with Him. But they are not susceptible of such a connexion as may be properly termed conjunction with Him; and therefore their existence terminates with their bodily life, and they are not capable of immortality. Again: Infernal spirits, called devils and the powers of darkness, though they live in a state of opposition and hatred against God and all the perfections which constitute his nature, retain, nevertheless, such a degree of connexion with Him, which they cannot destroy, that they continue to live, and *that* to eternity; the reason is, because they were created with a capacity of attaining that connexion with their Maker which is proper to rational and intelligent creatures, and which we have termed conjunction: thus they retain the faculties, proper to intelligent creatures, of liberty and rationality, though in a state of ruin and perversion: and, in consequence of their having been created with that capacity, and retaining these faculties, they retain such a degree of connexion with the Divine Source of life as to live eternally, though in a state of evil and corresponding misery. Such evil spirits do all wicked men become after the life of the body. But although all who have once come into existence as men, though they may pervert the design of their creation and separate themselves from conjunction with their Maker, nevertheless retain such a degree of connexion with Him as to live for ever,—yet there is reason to believe that, if all were to do so, the human race upon earth would perish. There would be no longer the means of bringing life from the Source of life into new subjects: and thus man collectively, understanding by that term human beings in the natural state of life, would drop out of existence. Should

man on earth ever become so divested of all religion,—ever so utterly alienated from God, and opposed to him, as to destroy in himself the capacity of conjunction with God to such a degree as to be incapable of communicating it to his posterity, no posterity, we may be assured, would be suffered to come into existence : the connexion of God with man would be so utterly cut off, that man communicating no longer with the only Source of life, would immediately fall into extinction. Such is the view which our religion and philosophy lead us to take of the necessity of religion to the maintenance of the connexion between man and his Maker. Without religion, in the breast of man individually, he can have no conjunction with his Creator, but is separated from the connexion with God proper to him as a rational and immortal existence : without any religion in the breasts of any of the inhabitants of the globe, that generation would be the last, and, after their removal to the abodes of wretchedness eternal, no beings calling themselves men would appear upon earth, to disgrace the original creation of the species in the image and likeness of God, and to perpetuate a race of mere rebels against their Creator.

If this be the true view of this momentous subject, (and surely it must be allowed to be a most rational one,) how immensely important must religion become in our estimation ! If the complete extinction of religion would be followed by the extinction of the human race, with what care should the sacred preservative be cherished in the breast of man ! He who becomes neglectful of religious principle or feeling in himself, or promotes the disregard of it in others, contributes his quota,—does as much as it is in his power to do,—towards the extirpation of the whole family of mankind. This dreadful and total catastrophe, however, is guarded against, by the continual watchfulness of the Divine Providence of the Lord. But every single individual is left at liberty, by the neglect or rejection of religion, to break that connexion of himself with the Lord, that conjunction with his Maker, which is properly intended for him as a man, and without which the true nature of man is destroyed in him ; when he becomes, in fact a more horrible monster than any brute, and unavoidably sinks into endless misery. Such is, depend upon it, my brethren,



friends, and fellow-creatures, the inward nature and character of every man who utterly rejects religion from his heart. Such, at least, our doctrines assure us is the case : how deeply then must those doctrines excite, in all who receive them, a dread of the very thought of falling into such a state ! Where there is no religion in the heart, there is no God : where God is not, there is hell : and he who has hell in his bosom, cannot but become, after death, one of its inhabitants. When such is the awful state and lot of those who are destitute of religion, and who have thus broken off the proper connexion between themselves and God, how truly shocking is the fact, that there are persons in this professedly Christian nation, who can boast of having expelled the principle from their minds, and who labour, with a truly infernal assiduity, to effect the same dreadful consummation in others ! They endeavour to give plausibility to their conduct, by founding their arguments against Christianity solely upon the corruptions which men have introduced into it ; while their arguments against the Scriptures rest altogether upon mistaken apprehensions of their meaning. In the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, the corruptions of the Christian faith are removed, and the right understanding of the Scriptures is communicated ; and thus, in those doctrines, all ground for plausible objection is taken away against either : most ardently then should it be desired, and is desired by many, that these doctrines should be generally received. Then, and then only, will the real importance to mankind of religion be perceived, and the strongest of inducements prevail to make it the governing principle of the mind and heart.

That such is the doctrine of the Word of God, respecting the importance and necessity of religion, need scarcely be urged upon any who give full credence to the inspired records : and to those who do not, to prove that such is the doctrine of the Scriptures, may have but little efficacy. As, however, the Scriptures are in reality the storehouse of all Divine Truth, so that what cannot be proved from this Source is of little worth ; and as, by virtue of their Divine Original, they have a power of affecting even the thoughtless, when they give their attention for a moment, which no other documents can possess ; and as, further, all the doctrines

which we are to deliver in these Lectures, whether immediately addressed to the professors of the Christian religion or not, are to be deduced from the Holy Scriptures, and bottomed on them as their everlasting foundation : I have selected as a text for this discourse a passage of divine prophecy, which fully teaches, both according to its literal and spiritual sense, the doctrines we have advanced ; of the necessity of religion to the maintenance of the connexion between man and his Maker. "The earth," says the prophet Isaiah, "is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate : therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Doubtless, by the earth here spoken of is meant, most specifically, the land of Canaan, by the inhabitants thereof, the Jews, and by the miseries which are mentioned, the afflictions which came upon that land and people through the invasions of the Assyrians and Babylonians : consequently, the laws that they had transgressed, and the ordinance that they had changed, are the laws and statutes of Moses ; and the everlasting covenant is the engagement made by God with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and, afterwards, with the Israelites their descendants at Mount Sinai, that, upon the condition of obedience, they should be his people, and he would be their God, and would bless them, with every good. In consequence of their utterly breaking this covenant, they themselves were visited with the most severe afflictions, and every species of calamity fell, as our text describes, upon the very land itself. Now, what thus took place with the people of Israel, on a small scale, and in an external but typical manner, is what must or would take place with the whole human race, upon their utterly breaking the everlasting covenant, in an internal and spiritual manner, and, in the extreme case, in the external manner also. Though the covenant with the Israelites, by which Canaan was promised them as a continual possession on condition of their observing the Mosaic ritual, is the covenant immediately referred to, yet it cannot be all that is here meant ; for this, as relating altogether to things temporal, could never, with strict propriety, be called an *ever-*

*lasting* covenant. But religion, as consisting in the acknowledgment, love, and worship of the Lord, is the everlasting covenant, established by the very laws of the creation of man, as a rational and accountable being, between him and his Creator. This is a covenant which is universal to the whole human race; for all, as being created with the endowment of rationality, are capable of knowing and serving the God who made them; and in order to their retaining or enjoying their connexion with Him, such as it was intended they should possess, the indefeasible condition is, that they should render Him acknowledgment and service. Thus they are connected with Him by a real conjunction of life, and, in consequence, derive eternal blessedness from Him; which is what He engages to bestow as his part of the covenant. The effect of covenants, also, among men, is, to unite two parties, as to the matter covenanted upon, into one. Certain conditions are stipulated on both sides, upon the performance of which they act as one in reference to a certain object. This is the case with all treaties of peace and alliance between nations, and with all contracts and agreements between individuals: by virtue of such treaties and contracts, the two parties are conjoined, as regards a certain object, into one. Hence, there is actually inherent, in the idea of a covenant, the idea of connexion or conjunction also: and thus, in the spiritual sense which is inwardly contained in the Word of God, though perhaps you may not at present be disposed to receive it, when a covenant between God and man is mentioned, his conjunction with his creatures is signified. The consequences of the breach of this conjunction, as described in our text, are, that the very earth or land is defiled, that a curse devours it, that they who dwell therein are desolate, that its inhabitants are burned, and that few men are left. Though all this literally took place with regard to the rebellious Israelites, it also is descriptive, in a typical manner, of what must take place with all mankind, and with every individual of them, on the entire dissolution of his or their proper connexion and conjunction with the Lord. They cannot but be separated from all spiritual blessings, and, in the extreme case, from all natural ones also: they cannot but become subject to the dreadful misery, described, in the symbolic language of Scripture,

as everlasting burnings ; and the human race itself, should all become such, must perish from the earth.

However, it is not my intention to go into an exact explanation of every particular of our text : I only meant to show, for the satisfaction of those who have any reverence for the Scripture, that the doctrine we have advanced is the doctrine of that holy record ; that there is the most imperious necessity for the maintenance, according to the order intended at creation, of the connexion of God with man ; that, without this connexion, man is necessarily separated from all capability of good and happiness, is subject, in the other life, to endless misery, and is liable, here, to total extinction ;—that even the extinction of the whole human race must follow the entire and universal breach of that connexion ; and that religion, as consisting in the observance of the divine laws and ordinances, which enjoin the acknowledgment, love, and worship of God, is the only medium of maintaining that conjunction. Most true is the declaration of our blessed Saviour, “Without me, ye can do nothing :” And again, “Abide in me, and I in you : As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.” These are plain declarations of the necessity of man’s maintaining the connexion of conjunction with the Lord, in order to his being the subject of life and good from Him. If the dependance of man, to be in his proper order, on his God, is like that of branches on the vine, most obviously, separated from Him, he becomes a mere nothing, or worse : he is cast off, as is said on the same occasion, like a deciduous branch, and is withered. As sap from the trunk is necessary to the living existence of the branch, so is spiritual life from the Lord necessary to the proper existence of man. As these are the statements of Scripture, so may any one easily discern that they are also the dictates of reason. Admit the existence of a God, the Only Fountain of life and of all good, and it immediately follows, that, in order to man’s enjoyment of life and good, he must be maintained in connexion with their Divine Source.

But whether this depends upon his cherishing the principle of religion, as consisting in the knowledge, love and worship of his Maker, may not yet, perhaps, be thought sufficiently established :

wherefore, upon this part of the subject before concluding, we will offer some brief observations.

It is very common with those who hold deistical opinions, and even with some who regard themselves as Christians, to imagine, that the Deity has nothing to do but to bestow upon man his gifts, while it is not at all necessary for man even to reflect upon and acknowledge them, much less to think of making any return. "What return," they ask, "can a frail and utterly dependant creature make to Him from whom he derives all that he is or has? How can a finite being give anything to an Infinite One? or how can anything that a finite being can do or say add any thing to Infinite Glory and Perfection?" These are specious common-places, but they are utterly beside the present question. Man, certainly, can bestow nothing upon Him from whom he receives all, and nothing that he can do or say can form any addition to Infinity; but in order to man's receiving, himself, his most distinguishing excellences as a man, he must acknowledge, with gratitude and love, the Source from whence he derives them, and return them to his God in humility and adoration. The brutes, indeed, many of which possess very admirable qualities, derive them all from the same Omnipotent Source; and they receive them without any knowledge, and of course without any love and worship, of the Hand from which they come; but, for this very reason, they possess no moral qualities, and no rational mind. If they are gentle, they are so by the constitution of their nature, and cannot be otherwise. They have no capacity of distinguishing between good and evil, and of choosing the one and rejecting the other. Hence, their gentleness is not virtue, and their ferocity is not vice; and, in the same manner, their instincts, though often very extraordinary and admirable, do not partake of the nature of reason. In one word, they have no *human* qualities. Human qualities cannot exist except in a being who is both a rational and a moral agent: and, therefore, the possession of their various good qualities by brutes, independently of any knowledge and worship of the Being from whom they derive them, affords no proof that man might possess his proper excellences as man, independently of an acknowledgment of the God who bestows them upon him.

Men, indeed, are to be met with in society, who, though they have heard of God, refuse to worship him, and even deny his existence: and such men often possess the rational faculty, so far as that consists in a mere capacity of reasoning, as perfectly as others, though not as it consists in a capacity of seeing truth by its own inherent light: but, whatever amiability of temper some of these may possess from natural constitution, it will invariably be found that self-love, how cautiously soever concealed, is their governing motive, and self-conceit, or the pride of their own understandings, the guide of their thoughts: and it is not often that these will be found unaccompanied even with the grosser vices. No virtue can be genuine, and free from the contamination of self regards, but that which derives its immediate fountain from the Source of all virtues; and nothing can come thus immediately from the Lord, which is not accompanied with acknowledgment of Him, with the ascription of all good to Him, and with the grateful worship of his Holy Name. To think of man's possessing genuine moral excellences, the proper virtues of humanity, without deriving them from the Source of all excellence, is an absolute contradiction: and to suppose that he who thus possesses them by gift, will not acknowledge, venerate, and worship, the Almighty Giver, is to add one contradiction to another. Man, also, is created with a capacity for improvement in virtue, and in all good and excellence, without end. But what is improvement in virtue and goodness, but the reception of them, in greater and greater fulness, from their Divine Original? And how can they be thus received, without acknowledgment of that Great Original, his nature and attributes, a love for the divine perfections which are infinite in Him, and the devout adoration of Him, as that suitable attitude of the soul, of which the outward forms of adoration are the signs and effects, and without which the graces He delights to bestow cannot find a place for their reception? Where there is no worship of the Lord, pride, which is the worship of self, takes its place: and where self is the idol we adore, and pride the worship we pay it, no graces flowing from the Lord, and which can only spring up, and bear fruit, in the soil of humility and of the acknowledgment of Him, can find room to drop their seeds in the bosom.

O my brethren, let me say to you in conclusion, be careful ever to cherish in your breast the sacred principle of religion. Religion is the Palladium in the temple of human excellences. Where this is, they flourish in safety ; where this is not, a spurious brood, resulting from a mere attention to character and the forms of society, will speedily usurp their place : and from the faces of many of these the mask will from time to time drop off, and discover, in lieu of a seeming virtue, a hideous and destructive vice. Without real virtues,—the very graces of heaven, a man is not really a man. In proportion to the accuracy and extent of his knowledge of the Lord, will be his opportunities of receiving genuine virtues from him : in proportion to his love of the Lord, as to the perfections which constitute his nature, will be his actual reception of those virtues and perfections : and in proportion as these exist in his bosom, will he spontaneously engage in the sincere worship of the Lord ; which will be, again, the medium of his receiving, in continually extending abundance, an increase of every grace that can exalt to its true standard the proper character of man. Thus will the true connexion or conjunction between man and his Maker be permanently re-established, and he will enjoy its fruit in blessedness everlasting.

## LECTURE III.

THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE DIVINE OBJECT OF WORSHIP,  
WHO IS LOVE ITSELF AND WISDOM ITSELF, OR GOODNESS  
ITSELF AND TRUTH ITSELF ; AND THE NECESSITY OF THE  
RECEPTION OF THOSE HOLY PRINCIPLES BY MAN, IN ORDER  
TO HIS SALVATION.

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Ps. lxxxix. 14, 15.

*"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne ; mercy  
and truth shall go before thy face. Blessed is the people that know  
the joyful sound : they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy  
countenance."*

PROPOSING to deliver some Lectures on some of the most important articles of the True Christian religion, as presented in the doctrines which we believe to be those of the New Jerusalem Dispensation of it, I addressed you, in our last upon the Necessity of Religion, as consisting in the knowledge, love, and worship of the Lord, for maintaining the connexion between man and his Maker : and I observed, that the nearness of the connexion between man and his Maker will be in proportion to the purity of his religion, and thus in proportion to the truth of his knowledge of the Lord, the ardour of his love for Him, and the sincerity of his worship of Him. The first position being admitted, or proved, as I trust, was satisfactorily done in that Discourse, the other follows by such necessary inference, that I did not then, nor shall I now, undertake the superfluous labour of establishing it by argument. Every one who admits that religion is necessary to maintain the connexion between man and his Maker, will admit, also, that the nearness of that connexion will be in proportion to the purity of the religion, and thus in proportion to the truth of man's knowledge of the Lord, the



genuineness of his love for Him, and the sincerity with which he adores Him.

Now this obvious truth is related to another not less clear and important. In regard to the benefits to be derived from religion, much, we see, depends upon its quality and character. But will not the quality and character of a man's religion very greatly depend upon the idea which he possesses, or which his religion teaches him, of the God who is the object of his veneration? It is the nature of all religion, so far as it is sincerely cherished, to assimilate the character of the worshipper to that of the Being whom he worships. Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God. So far as his true connexion with God is retained or restored, he still partakes of that image and likeness: and this connexion is only maintained by religion. Thus, if true religion, which includes a just idea of God, tends to produce in man the image and likeness of the true God, most certainly any religion, provided it is assiduously cultivated, will tend to produce in man the image of the God who is presented for adoration by that religion. What impressed on the celebrated Reformer, Calvin, the severity and harshness of character which his greatest admirers must allow that he possessed, and which is acknowledged even by his great friend and panegyrist, Beza, but the harsh and cruel idea which he had formed of God? Or, if we reverse the position, and conclude that Calvin drew his portrait of God, in this respect, from himself, and pictured Him as a relentless and cruel Being because his own natural disposition was of such a complexion, still, did not his idea of God, when even thus formed, re-act upon himself, encourage him to carry out the dictates of his own severe nature, and justify him to himself in persecuting all who differed from him in opinion, under the persuasion that he was "doing God service?" How important then it is, in order that religion may produce in us the excellent effects for which it was instituted, that it should be a religion which imparts to us just conceptions of the nature or character of God. What we believe God to be, we must aim, if we have any religion in us, at becoming, as far as our finite and imperfect nature will permit, ourselves. The Lord Jesus Christ expressly commands us to follow Him, to make his example ours:

and according to the ideas we form of his character, if we regard Him as our God, or of the character of the God, whoever he may be, whom we really regard as such, will infallibly, to a greater or less extent, be modelled our own. God is the centre of all religion, and, to him who has religion, is the centre of his soul: such then as is the quality of that object which is in the centre of the soul, will the quality of the whole man become. Nothing therefore can be more important to a rational and immortal creature,—to a being capable of God,—than to have just ideas of the nature of that Being who is to be the centre and object of his inmost thoughts and affections: and *that* religion must be the most capable of answering the end for which all religion is designed, of maintaining the proper connexion between man and God, and producing in man his true image and likeness, which affords the most just conceptions of the essential nature and real perfections of the adorable Being who is the Author of our existence, and from whom alone we can derive the qualities which are to be the foundation of our everlasting happiness.

This great subject, then,—being that which occupies the first place in the whole circle of theological truths—is that on which it is proposed to treat in the present Lecture. We will contemplate *the Essential Nature of the Divine Object of Worship, who is Love itself and Wisdom itself, or Goodness itself and Truth itself: and the Necessity of the Reception of those Principles by Man, in order to his Salvation.* And as the views I am to lay before you on this momentous subject are those which we receive as the doctrines of the True Christian Church prefigured under the image of the New Jerusalem, you will judge how far those doctrines, on the most essential point of all religion, are worthy to be accepted as such. Let us enter on the inquiry with the solemnity of feeling, the devotional reverence, which such a subject demands! May He who created us, and whom, therefore, we ought all to love and serve, enable me so to speak, and you so to hear, that just views of his Essential Nature,—an apprehension of Him, in some measure, as He really is,—may be opened and established in all our minds, and may exercise upon us the due influence of such just views and apprehension, in assimilating us unto his image and likeness!

“What is God?” This is a question the most concerning that can be asked by a being, who, like man, and all finite existences, is the creature of his will, who is gifted by Him with an immortal nature, and who depends wholly upon Him for all which can make that immortality a valuable endowment. And no satisfactory answer whatever could be given to the inquiry, had not God revealed himself, to us, in his written Word, and, in the primeval ages, by other revelations, from which, however disguised and perverted, some traditional knowledge of Him is current throughout the earth. Yet his Word, also, in many instances, is expressed according to human apprehensions, and sometimes describes the nature of the Creator, rather according to what He appears to man to be, in certain states of man’s perception, than to what He actually is in Himself, or in his own essential nature; and hence men, even with the Word of God in their hands, and professing to go to it for instruction, have sometimes formed very low and degrading conceptions respecting the Author of their being. But though the Holy Word sometimes speaks of the Lord according to the apprehensions of men, and in a manner adapted to make a more useful impression upon men of gross and carnal minds, provided they actually believe what is told them, than would be the result of conveying to such minds, the pure truth itself, which they would pervert and abuse,—it at the same time contains abundance of passages which place the truth itself, on this divine subject, immediately before the mind of the reader. I propose then to show, in the first place, *That the Essential Nature of the Lord is, as affirmed in the proposition before recited, Love itself and Wisdom itself, or Goodness itself and Truth itself; or that those holy Principles constitute His Essence.* This I shall confirm from the testimony of Scripture, and from the nature of man. In the second place, I will endeavour to establish, *That no attributes inconsistent with these great Essentials of Love and Wisdom in any degree enter into the Divine Nature; consequently, that God is incapable of any feeling like that of Anger or Wrath; and that the attributing of such Passions to God greatly obscures Man’s apprehensions respecting Him; and darkens the System of Theology in which it is admitted.* And I will conclude with some observations tending to guard this grand subject from

perversion, and to evince, *That although God, in his Essence, is pure and infinite Love and Wisdom, and nothing else, and thus is incapable of feeling the Passion of Anger even against his most obdurate Enemies, this affords no encouragement to the Sinner to persevere in his evil courses ; since no one can be saved, and enjoy that felicity which the Divine Love is ever desirous to impart, except by the reception, from the Lord, of the saving graces of love and wisdom in his own heart and mind, and his being assimilated thereby to the Divine image and likeness.*

The Scriptures, being written, though by divine inspiration, by men of ordinary human feelings and perceptions, and intended to accommodate divine things to the apprehension of even the most carnal of mankind, never treat of God in the style which philosophers would have chosen, by referring to abstract principles ; and thus, in very few instances indeed, do they speak of his abstract nature. They speak, in general, of what He does, and of what He loves and requires in his people, rather than of what He is in Himself. But a most clear and direct inference to what He is in Himself is hereby afforded : for what does he require of man, as declared by himself through his prophet Micah, " but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God ? " An Apostle, indeed, even that disciple whom Jesus loved, and whose own excellent graces best qualified him to perceive and appreciate the essential qualities and attributes of the divine nature expressly assures us that " God is love : " a declaration which he twice repeats in the course of a few verses. " Beloved," saith he, [John iv. 7, 8,] " let us love one another : for love is of God : and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God : for God is love." Again, he saith, in the same decided manner [ver. 16,] " God is love : and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." These two declarations of an Apostle, in which he may be considered as collecting into one doctrinal statement the substance of all the enunciations of Scripture upon the subject, may surely be considered as decisive of the question. If the disciple whom, for his excellent graces, Jesus is emphatically said to have loved, knew any thing of the nature of his Divine Master, we may rely upon it that love is the first

constituent of Deity ; that, when it is proposed to define the Divine Being, or his Essential Nature, in the most brief and comprehensive manner, it can only be done by saying, " God is love." Love Itself, which is Love Infinite, and admitting no mixture of any heterogeneous principle or impulse, is the very first essential of the Divine Nature, comprehending all the others : so that, to describe God in a summary manner, no more than three words are requisite : it is only necessary to say, with the Apostle John, **GOD IS LOVE.**

This then, as already intimated, is the most express statement which is to be found in the Bible of the Essential Nature of Deity : but, as was likewise intimated, it is a doctrinal summary of the contents of the whole of the Scriptures. Although the same express declaration does not occur, for instance, in the Gospels, in so many words, there are plenty of statements in them which amount to the same thing. Thus, when the Lord Jesus Christ gives that exquisite injunction of divine tenderness, " Love your enemies, bless them that curse you ; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you ;" when He subjoins, as a reason for this injunction, " that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven ;" and when he again explains this by adding, " for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust ;" what does he teach in all these moving exhortations and statements, but that **GOD IS LOVE ;** and therefore that, to be His children, love, as the reigning and moving principle of our conduct, is to be cultivated by us ? If we, in order to our being the children of God, are to cherish love without restriction, even towards our enemies and persecutors ; and if God Himself, in like manner dispenses the bounties of His love towards all, towards the evil as well as towards the good, evincing that, in his own breast, He cherishes angry feelings towards none, but extends His love to every human being alike : well was the apostle justified in affirming love to be the first principle of His Nature, and considering all other divine attributes to look to this as the chief, in declaring, that **GOD IS LOVE.**

What is thus the testimony, respecting the Essential Nature

of God, of His Word in the New Testament, is not less the testimony of His Word in the Old Testament. When He proclaimed his Divine Name or Nature before Moses, in terms which are several times repeated in the other writings of Moses and the prophets, it was by a periphrasis, describing his attribute and nature of Love, that he was pleased to give the delineation: "The Lord," we read, [Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7,] "passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands (or, to the thousandth generation), forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." This, surely, is a description of a Being, and can only be justly applied to a Being, whose Essential Nature is Love. And when it is added, as given in our translation, "And that will by no means clear the guilty," this, as is now agreed by the learned, is not the proper meaning of the original, which only carries on the same gracious sentiments as have before been expressed; the proper meaning of the original being, that He does not utterly destroy, or punish to the last extremity, even the guilty. Thus far, then, this announcement, by Jehovah Himself, of His character and nature, is only an amplification of the concise statement of the Apostle, God is LOVE. Nor does the clause with which it concludes, when the real purport of such statements of Scripture is understood, at all diminish the love and goodness which the former clauses express. That clause is, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation:" for, rightly understood, this does not mean that there is any thing of angry feeling, still less of arbitrary vengeance, in the bosom of the Lord, but is a statement of consequences which are inherent in the nature of evil itself.

Clear enough then, it appears to be, that whenever the Scripture treats expressly on the nature of God, it teaches that He is Love. But, according to our proposition, God is not only Love Itself, but Wisdom Itself likewise: and testimonies which we have adduced to His being Essential Love, by no means exclude His being Essential Wisdom also. Wisdom, in fact, proceeds from Love, as light proceeds from fire: and where pure love is, there pure wisdom must be also. Love designs, intends, and

prompts, being a principle most essentially active ; but in order to its going forth into act, and producing the effects to which its beneficent nature tends, it must find the means in another principle, distinct from itself, yet essential to its existence : and this can be nothing but wisdom. Wisdom must plan, arrange, and produce, what love desires, proposes, and impels to. Without love to prompt and wisdom to direct, there could have been no creation : and it was under an impulse of divine wisdom, and by illumination thence, that the Psalmist was led to exclaim, "O Lord, how wonderful are thy works ! in *wisdom* hast thou made them all : " an exclamation, in which none who contemplate the divine works of creation, with any sort of apprehension of their order and nature, and with any acknowledgment of the Hand that made them, can refrain from joining. In the New Testament, the Divine Wisdom is sometimes called *the Word*, and sometimes *the Light*, and *the Truth* ; and respecting *the Word*, John opens his Gospel with saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." It is, as just remarked, as to that Essential of His Nature called Divine Wisdom, that the Lord is denominated **THE WORD** ; and, most certainly, it was by the Divine Wisdom, impelled and inspired by the Divine Love, that all things were made, and the universe was called into existence. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth."

But while the Scriptures so clearly speak of the Essential Nature of God as being Infinite Love, and mention, in other passages, Wisdom as being another Essential of his Nature, and without which his Love must have remained inoperative, and He never could have assumed the character of a Creator ; there are also whole classes of passages which advert to these two Essentials of the Divine Nature in union. In the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, frequent mention is made of the Lord's "mercy and truth ;" and also to Him are repeatedly ascribed, in union, "justice and judgment ;" and in each of these cases, mercy and justice are terms or qualities belonging to, and ex-

pressing, the Lord's Divine Love and Goodness ; and truth and judgment are terms and qualities belonging to, and expressing, his Divine Wisdom and Truth. An example of both occurs in our text. The inspired Psalmist, glorifying the Lord, exclaims, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne ; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." And, referring to the happiness of knowing that these are the chief essentials of the divine nature, and of receiving the communications of them to form the life of the soul, the sacred penman adds, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound : they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." That mercy is a name, form, and attribute of love, must be plain to every one ; mercy is love, exercised to those who are helpless and miserable ; as, in themselves, must be all the objects of the Lord's Divine Love. As He can have no objects for his love but his own creatures, and these must necessarily be all infinitely beneath Him, and destitute of every good and comfort but what they receive from Him ; his love to them must, in all cases, be the purest mercy : but most obviously is this the case, when He showers his benefits upon man in his state of opposition, rebellion, and sinfulness. Mercy and truth, then, are obviously expressive of love or goodness and truth : and these are very frequently ascribed to the Lord. To instance in the Psalms alone : we there read, "The paths of the Lord are mercy and truth ;"—"God shall send forth his mercy and his truth :"—"O prepare mercy and Truth, which may preserve him :"—"Mercy and truth are met together :"—"Thou art plenteous in mercy and truth :"—"Mercy and truth shall go before thy face :"—"He hath remembered his mercy and his truth."

In the same manner, many passages might be collected which ascribe to God "justice and judgment," or, as the same original word is very frequently translated in the English Bible, "Righteousness and judgment ;" as when it is said in our text, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." Justice, in the language of Scripture, is so completely synonymous with righteousness, that, as just noticed, the original word is quite as often rendered by our translators righteousness as justice. Now righteousness is obviously the attribute of goodness ; as is judgment the exercise and decision of truth. The constant ascrip-



tion, therefore, of justice or righteousness, and judgment, to the Lord, is equivalent to a declaration, that his Nature is essentially Goodness and Truth.

We have made Love nearly synonymous with goodness, and wisdom with truth, in saying that God is, as to his Essential Nature, Love itself and Wisdom itself, or Goodness itself and Truth itself: because Love and Goodness, as also Wisdom and Truth, are so united as to be inseparable, though they are not precisely the same things. All that proceeds from love is good: and the will to produce or do good is only prompted by love. If God, therefore, is pure Goodness, He must also be pure Love: if He is pure Love, He must also be pure Goodness. So, wisdom is inseparable from truth: it consists in the knowledge, arrangement, and the right use, of truths: If God therefore is pure Wisdom, he must also be pure Truth: and if he is pure Truth, he must also be pure Wisdom.

Scripture, then, evidently presents to us Love and Wisdom, or Goodness and Truth, as the two most essential constituents of the Divine Nature: and the same is obvious from the proper nature of man. Man, the Scripture informs us, was created in the image and likeness of God: and our finite capacities can have no better mode of conceiving what God is. Let us think of all that is excellent in the capacities or faculties of man, of all that is excellent in the constituents of his nature: let us separate this from all that is corrupt, debased, disorderly, weak, and impure; and let us add to it the idea of infinity: and we have the best idea a finite creature can conceive of God. Let us conceive what is proper to man as an image and likeness of God, and then pass from the copy to the original, adding the ideas of Infinity and Self-existence: and this conception of Him, making allowance for our weakness, will be the best to which our faculties can attain. But all man's excellences resolve themselves into two classes,—the endowments of his heart and those of his head,—the virtues of his will and those of his understanding; and these, whatever names we may give them, are all modifications of the two universals of all excellence—love and wisdom, or goodness and truth. Those principles, then, which, in their derivation, form the proper excellences of human nature,—the

perfections proper to man as an image and likeness of God,—must, in their underived source, and as existing infinitely in God, constitute the two first principles of his Essential Nature.

When we reflect on the infinity of perfections that must necessarily exist in the Divine Nature, infinite in number as well as infinite in greatness, we seem in danger of being swallowed up in the fathomless abyss. No virtue ever came to apprehension among men, or received a name in any of the languages of mankind, which, in its pure essence and inmost origin, does not reside in the bosom of Deity, and does not thence proceed forth to elevate, adorn and beatify, his human images. What the Psalmist says of the divine thoughts is no less true of the moral perfections of the Lord ; which, indeed, must be meant to be included in the expression : “ How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God ! how great is the sum of them ! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.” Well may a weak mortal exclaim, on attempting some contemplation of the infinite subject, “ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it ! ” But though our admiration can never be diminished, our embarrassment is somewhat relieved, when we are enabled to perceive, as is the truth, that innumerable as the divine perfections are, all the infinity of attributes which can be conceived of,—yea, immensely more than can be conceived of,—all the infinity of attributes which can possibly exist in the Divine Nature, are nothing but modifications of the two great universal essential principles, Love and Wisdom, or Goodness and Truth. What, even, is the great attribute which is the first that occurs to many when they attempt to form an idea of God,—the attribute of Omnipotence, or Infinite Power ;—what is this stupendous attribute, but the activity of Infinite Love and Wisdom in union,—the ability of carrying the purposes and plans of Infinite Love and Wisdom into act ? And how delightful is this conception of the first attributes of Divinity, not only for its beautiful and re-assuring simplicity, but for its attractive and engaging amiableness. Think of God primarily from the idea of Infinite Power, and how tremendous a Being does he appear ! But think of Him primarily from the idea of Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom ; and how lovely as

well as admirable and adorable a Divinity does He become ! And think of his Infinite Power according to the idea just suggested,—as nothing but Infinite Love and Wisdom going forth into action, and accomplishing their purposes of beneficence with unfailing Might ; and how does the sense of terror subside, while humility, love, and adoration, assume its place ! How great, then, are the moral benefits which such an idea of the Essential Nature of God is calculated to produce in ourselves ! How excellent and amiable will be the character of man, when assimilated into the image and likeness of such a God as this !

But we are also to show, *That no Attributes inconsistent with these great Essentials of Love and Wisdom in any degree enter into the Divine Nature, consequently, that God is incapable of any feeling like that of Anger or Wrath ; and that the attributing of such Passions to God greatly obscures Man's apprehensions respecting Him, and darkens the System of Theology in which it is admitted.*

Excuse me, my friends, if I make a remark upon this latter subject first, which perhaps may contradict the previous sentiments which some of you have received.

It is common with many theologians to ascribe to God an attribute which they call vindictive justice ; in consequence of which it has been very generally believed, that the Father of mercy really burns with such wrath against sinners, that nothing can appease him but the infliction of death eternal, either in himself or by a substitute, upon every one who has ever transgressed the divine law so much as in one iota. Do not be alarmed, my friends ; do not imagine that I am going to weaken, in the smallest degree, the necessity of our redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, or the efficacy of his sufferings and death. Most fully do we believe, that without the redemption of Jesus Christ, and without the benefits procured by his death and sufferings, man must have perished everlastingly. The redemption of Jesus Christ was indispensably necessary for our salvation, although Jehovah does not require, for every single offence, and after it has been put away by sincere repentance, that man should be punished without end. Call this supposed attribute, which demands eternal vengeance for every imperfection, even after repentance and

amendment ;—call such an attribute justice, or whatever we may please, it surely is equivalent to what we call in men inexorable rage, unappeasable revenge ; and to ascribe it to the Lord, is the same thing as to affirm, that He is in his own nature essential anger, not Essential Love. It is true that the anger, and even the fierce anger, of the Lord, are mentioned in the Holy Word in a variety of places : but here, as we have before intimated, the Sacred Record speaks in accommodation to human apprehension. Just in the same manner it is sometimes said that the Lord repents, or is sorry for what He had purposed to do, and even, sometimes, for what he had actually done. Thus we read, when the wickedness of man had arrived at its greatest height, just before the flood, that “it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth ;” and not only so, but that “it grieved him at his heart.” So, after Saul had become disobedient, it is said, that “it repented the Lord that he had made Saul king over Israel.” If we understand this literally, how does it agree with every idea we can form of the foreknowledge and infinite wisdom of God ? How does it agree with those other declarations which are repeated in various parts of the Holy Word, in which it is said, that “God is not as man that he should lie, or as the son of man that he should repent ?” [Num. xxiii. 19 ; 1 Sam. xv. 29 ; Mal. iii. 6, &c.] How plain is it to see, that, when the Sacred Record speaks *thus*, it declares the genuine truth, as it really exists in the Divine Nature ; whereas when it speaks of the Lord’s repenting, it cannot mean to affirm any actual change in the Lord himself, but must be spoken, as the Apostle Paul says he sometimes speaks, [Rom. vi. 19 ; Gal. iii. 15,] after the manner of men. It is, in reality, a form of speech intended to express a total cessation of every thing, on the part of those to whom it refers, by which they stood in the order for which they were created, or were raised up,—an utter state of apostasy on the part of man, not a change of sentiment in the immutable God. Similar is the way in which we are to understand those passages in which anger is ascribed to the Lord. Anger is one of the greatest infirmities of human nature, from which they who have most succeeded in emancipating themselves have always been considered as approaching nearest to what human nature ought

to be. What should we think of a judge, who should pronounce sentence upon even the greatest of criminals under the influence of anger? All would consider such a judge to be unworthy of his office, and totally unfit to be entrusted with the power of deciding on the lives and fortunes of others. How then can it be conceived, that a passion which would disgrace a human judge, can be an attribute belonging to the Supreme Judge?—that a passion which is among the strongest evidences of human infirmity, can be among the attributes of Infinite Perfection? Surely, then, it cannot be difficult to see, that when anger, like repentance, is sometimes, in the letter of the Holy Word, ascribed to Jehovah, it is done in the way of accommodation to the gross ways of thinking of sensualized man;—that it is merely a strong mode of representing the utter contrariety of the sinner's state of mind to the divine perfections, and of expressing the impossibility of his abiding, while he remains in his sinful state, in the presence of Infinite Goodness, or of enjoying that felicity of which Infinite Goodness is the only Source. We are taught by it, that it is as utterly impossible for wickedness to enter the Divine Presence, or for the sinner to enjoy the happiness of which the Lord is the Only Fountain, as if the Lord actually did burn with anger against him. Evil and good are irreconcilable contraries: and to him who makes evil his good, pure good, which is essential love, cannot really appear as good or love; but good as evil and love as anger. In all evil, also, misery is inherent; and they who make it their good must finally be as wretched, as they could be, did anger and wrath actually burn against them in the bosom of the all-merciful God.

It may be worthy of remark, further, that frequently as the anger of the Lord is mentioned in Scripture, it never has a place in any of the descriptions which the Lord gives of his own attributes. When He expressly declares who and what He is, He never calls himself a God of anger;—a circumstance which might alone lead us to the conclusion, that whenever his anger is incidentally spoken of, it does not refer to anything which has positively an existence in Himself, but only to a state of evil and contrariety to the Divine Goodness in the sinner, which renders

the sinner incapable of viewing Him as He really is,—a God of love. In this character, though it is really that which most essentially belongs to Him, none can view Him indeed, but they, who, by the reception of his love in their own hearts, are in some measure conformed to his image and likeness. When therefore the scripture speaks of the Lord's being angry, visiting the sins of the fathers on the children, and the like, it speaks according to the appearance. Evils often fall upon children through the sins or misconduct of their parents: but it is not the Lord who brings this upon them; it is the result of circumstances, which, without disturbing the order of his creation, and producing worse mischiefs, the Lord, all love and goodness as He is, cannot interfere to prevent. Who that is capable of rising to some degree of interior thought, does not see, as of himself, that if man is to continue such a being as we see that he is, as to his essential nature according to which he was created,—a being left to act in perfect freedom from a self-determining power in his own mind (and even those who deny that he is thus free in reality, acknowledge that his own perceptions dictate that he is so);—that if he is thus to be maintained, to all appearance (and, as we believe, in absolute reality) a free agent, and that he would cease to be a human being if this freedom were to be taken from him;—then the permission of evil is a necessary consequence: since if he were not permitted, when he lusts towards evil, actually to commit it, all appearance of being free would be taken away. Is then the evil which man from his own evil state commits, from the Lord, the result of his positive will, because He permits it? Assuredly not. What the Lord wills is, that man should be preserved in a state of freedom, because no otherwise could anything good from the Lord be appropriated by him and imputed to him; consequently, he would be incapable of heaven, and even of eternal life. Whatever then is necessary to maintain this state, and thus to bring him to heaven and make him a partaker of eternal life, even when it involves the permission of evil, the Lord, though He wills nothing but good, sees good to permit; because, otherwise, all the good intended for man in his creation would be defeated. The permission of natural evil is altogether similar. Wherever moral evil exists, natural evil, which

is its outward manifestation, will follow : yet natural evil is no more a result of will in the Lord than moral evil is. All evils that exist, whether natural or moral, are permitted by the Lord for the prevention of greater, and are overruled by Him for the eventual promotion of his purposes of pure beneficence. Nothing then can be more erroneous than to imagine, that because evils, both moral and natural, exist in the world, they proceed from motives of will, and thus from wrath, anger, or vengeance, in the bosom of Deity. All that He wills is good—the eternal benefit of his creatures ; and all that He permits which is not good, He permits for the same object ;—because no otherwise can the eternal desire of his Love, the truest welfare of his creatures, be so effectually promoted.

I will conclude with a few observations with the view of guarding this doctrine of the pure goodness of the Lord from being perverted ; and will show, very briefly, *That although God in his Essence is pure and infinite Love and Wisdom, and thus is incapable of feeling the Passion of Anger even against his most obdurate Enemies, this affords no encouragement to the Sinner to persevere in his evil courses ;* since no one can be saved, and enjoy that felicity which Divine Love is ever desirous to impart, except by the reception, from the Lord, of the saving graces of love and wisdom in his own heart and mind, and his being assimilated thereby into the Divine image and likeness.

Every one sees by the light of reason itself as soon as he hears it, that there can be no attribute in God at variance with the primary one of Love : Yet religious persons are often afraid of admitting this truth, from the apprehension, that if God is nothing but love, and really makes the sun of his divine favour, both spiritually and naturally, to shine alike upon the evil and the good, there will be no final difference between vice and virtue, and that eternal happiness must equally be the portion of the wicked and of the good. But many are the mistakes which are involved in this erroneous conclusion. If evil were not to be restrained, by punishment, from pursuing its objects and delights, all the order of the universe would be destroyed, and universal anarchy, bringing with it universal wretchedness, would be the result. Though, therefore, God wills it not, and takes no delight

in punishing, there must be punishments for the wicked hereafter : and though God wishes to lead all to happiness in heaven, this cannot be conferred upon a man, without destroying his nature as a man, against his own will and consent : and as it is in this life that man finally makes up the state of his spirit, and becomes confirmed, without the possibility of change hereafter, either in good or in evil ; in order that it might be possible for him to choose the good and live in eternal happiness, it was necessary that he should be left also at liberty to choose evil and plunge in everlasting wretchedness. Happiness, also, and misery, are respectively inherent in good and evil themselves, and are inseparable from them : it is therefore impossible to make any one happy by compulsion, just as it is impossible by compulsion to make him good. If, therefore, evil be left freely to man's choice, so also must misery. There is no attaining happiness eternal, but by freely receiving, in the heart and mind, love and wisdom from their Infinite Source : Where these are, there, and there alone, is happiness.

It appears, therefore, most evident, that although, where evil exists, misery must be consequent upon it, yet this indispensable arrangement of Divine Order forms no drawback from the certainty of the comforting and animating truth, that the Lord Almighty, our Heavenly Father, is, in his own nature, nothing but Love and Wisdom, and that his love ever burns to impart good to all, while his wisdom is ever engaged in providing means to accomplish the ends designed by such love. We see that if there are finite creatures who seem uninfluenced by the operation upon them of these divine attributes, this arises from a necessity that must ever attach to created natures ; since only the Divine Nature can be free from imperfection ; and if men could be created free from imperfection, which alone could make them secure from the liability to lapse into evil, they would not be men, but gods. But that Divine Power in its utmost infinity can never create beings of the same nature as God Himself, every rational perception concludes instinctively. The lamentable fact, then, that many do not comply with the desires of Divine Love and Wisdom, by accepting that heavenly good in which is inherent eternal happiness, is no argument that Love and



Wisdom, such as have this result ever in view, are not the most essential attributes and elements of the Divine Nature, or that any passion of the nature of anger can possibly dwell with them in the same Divine breast.

If, then, brethren, the God with whom we have to do is essentially such as we have faintly attempted to describe, how are we to conduct ourselves to comply with his will? How, but by applying ourselves to respond to his gracious inclinations towards us, by accepting from Him, and cultivating in ourselves, the communications of that Love and Wisdom which are essentially Himself? To regain in some measure his image and likeness, when the desire of his inmost nature is to impart it to us, surely cannot be a work of very insuperable difficulty. Must not, as already suggested, the conviction, once profoundly received, that such is the nature of God, of itself, tend to model our hearts and minds in conformity with so amiable as well as admirable an Original? Assuredly, nothing can be more animating, or more exalting, than the entire belief, that God, the author of our being, and whose will should be ours, is, most essentially, Love Itself and Wisdom Itself, and that nothing is so much desired by Him, as that these principles should shine as the distinguishing characteristics of all his rational creatures.

## LECTURE IV.

DIVINE LOVE THE MOVING CAUSE OF CREATION.

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REV. iv. 11.

*"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created."*

THE Essential Nature of the Divine Object of our worship is a thing of such transcendent importance to his dependent creatures, and to possess both just and assured convictions respecting it, is, to them, of such incalculable interest and necessity, that I will pursue the subject in the present Lecture, and will further develop some of the points of inquiry which were but incidentally touched upon in our last.

Many are the questions upon which the reason of a man who is accustomed to exercise that invaluable gift, is naturally, and not improperly disposed to be active, but to which no satisfactory answer can be obtained, till, as the Psalmist expresses it, he enters into the sanctuary of God ; or seeks a solution of his inquiries at the oracles of Divine Truth. Yet here, again, if we rely on those who assume to be the interpreters of those oracles, there is frequent danger of disappointment. The oracles of Divine Truth are usually consulted through the medium of the creeds which the various classes of the disciples of Christianity have professed to derive from them : and hence the answers obtained, in regard to many questions of the highest importance, are too often anything but convincing in the estimation of reason : and reason, if not competent to give answers, of itself, to questions on interior and purely spiritual subjects, can nevertheless judge of their

truth, when obtained, either really or only in profession, from a higher source.

Now there probably are few points in the whole circle of Theology, in which (if we may say it without offence,) the framers of systems have more greatly erred, than in their answer to the question, *What was the motive which primarily influenced the Divine Mind in the creation of the universe? and, in fact, in all his dealings with his creatures since?* Our text declares, "that for the Lord's pleasure, all things are and were created." The truth of this statement is seen and recognised by all: but of what nature, herein, was the Lord's pleasure,—or, as the original expression properly means, his *will*,—has not been so clearly seen; and in reality, great mistakes have existed respecting it.

In contemplating the divine attributes, that which, as noticed in our last, seems most obviously to command attention, and thence to have chiefly arrested the mind of systematic writers on Divinity, is, the Infinite Power of God. No one can meditate on the Divine Being at all without having this immediately presented to his apprehension. This divine attribute, more than any other, rivets the notice of man in a state of barbarism and ignorance; and perhaps it is unavoidably the first which presents itself to the untutored mind, when attempting to soar towards heavenly meditations. Most worthily then does it demand a few observations.

We certainly cannot open our eyes at all, with any acknowledgment of a Superior Being in our hearts, without beholding the marks of his Omnipotence in everything that meets the view. If we look round on the face of nature, we behold the globe on which we stand variegated, in beautiful alternations, with land and water, mountains and vallies, forests and fields. We find the solid parts of the earth's surface covered with an endless variety of trees and herbs, including innumerable flowers to please the eye, and fruits without end to gratify the palate, and contribute to the support of human life: while such of the vegetable productions as are not so immediately required for the nourishment of man, supply the means of subsistence to animals of a lower order. Here, again, the flood of wonders, arguing infinite power in their Creator, continues to rise upon us. The

diversity of tribes which form the animal kingdom are scarcely less numerous than those which exhaust astonishment by their multiplicity in the vegetable domains. The land and the water, the regions of air, and even the interior surface of the ground, are alike peopled with sentient inhabitants; the principal of which man finds means to subjugate to his control, and derives from them the most valuable aids to increase the comforts of his own existence.

But when he raises his glance from the earth around him, and contemplates the scene which is displayed by the sky above him; when he looks at the glorious luminary that imparts heat and light to this mundane system, and beholds how

“Th’ unwearied sun, from day to day,  
Does his Creator’s power display;”

when he observes again, that

“Soon as the evening shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wondrous tale;”—

when he contemplates, further, the countless stars,—especially if science has dawned upon his mind, and shed some light on the true nature of those hosts of heaven (as they are sublimely termed in Scripture,) discovering their immense magnitude, their unimaginable distance, their inconceivable number: When, I say, man takes such a view of the wonders which the frame of outward nature sets before his eyes—to say nothing of the still more admirable wonders discoverable on an inspection of his own frame and constitution; he cannot fail to be overpowered with a sense of the boundless infinity of that Almighty Power, by which the whole was spoken into existence.

No wonder, then, if this most obvious, most striking, of the divine attributes, has been the chief divine perfection contemplated by the framers of systems of theology,—at least, in modern times. Still less need we wonder, if, on examining the superstitions of savages, we find that they have stronger ideas of the power of their deities than of any of their moral qualities; for they commonly regard them as being at least equally disposed to exert their power in acts of malevolence as in those of benignity. Nay, so natural is this veneration of *mere power* to the human mind, even when most highly cultivated by science and literature,

so long as it is a stranger to the more amiable and elevating views of Deity which nothing but an acknowledgment of pure Divine Truth can impart, that it has been justly observed of the most celebrated poet of recent times, that while his writings exhibit little trace of a reference to a benevolent Deity, they frequently display strong marks of a disposition to adore mere power;—that power alone,—the brute power being able to do anything, good or bad, to which an impulse may arise, seemed the only thing capable of raising any feelings approaching to religious veneration in the energetic but misdirected mind of a Byron.

Since then it is indubitable, that the idea of Infinite Power is that which most strongly affects the mind of man in his natural state, there is no occasion for surprise, if this was the divine attribute chiefly contemplated by the framers of the present generally prevailing systems of Divinity:—systems, be it remembered, as an apology for the censure, for the most part framed in an age of darkness, or at best but of dawning light, when the minds of men, beginning to try their unfledged pinions on awaking from the death-like sleep of the Romish domination, had not yet learned to make the best use of those faculties, which they had only just discovered, after an oblivion of ages, that they possessed. The first thing that struck the attention of these restorers of freedom to human inquiries, when meditating on the attributes of God, was his infinite power: and connecting this power with the same adjuncts which usually attend superior power when possessed by men, the motive assigned by them for the creation of the universe was such as might be expected to influence great Power if unaccompanied by amiable moral attributes,—an inclination to exert itself in such a manner as to attract admiration,—a desire to surround itself with witnesses and admirers. Accordingly, the creeds of most churches to the present day, affirm, that angels, men, the earth, and all creation, were made by God purely for his own glory: that, in all that he has since done to or for man, even in the work of redemption itself, the advancement of his own glory was the prime moving impulse with God: that in all his works of Providence, his own glory is the principal thing he regards. In short, all the other attributes together which have existence

in God are supposed to act in complete subordination to that of his Infinite power, and to his desire to exalt his own glory.

I believe that this view is presented in most systems of religion. It certainly forms the cardinal point of the Calvinistic scheme : and this greatly preponderates in the Articles of the Church of England, wholly reigns in the Church of Scotland, and is embraced by the far greater portion of the English Dissenters.

That glory is most justly due to the Almighty Lord for all his wondrous works, and will be rendered Him with humble devotion by every rightly feeling mind, is unquestionable : but whether the desire of this constitutes a governing motive in the Divine Mind, and became the moving cause of creation, is a totally different question, and one well worthy of a moment's consideration.

That the love of glory is a passion very congenial to the nature of mankind, is, indeed, very certain : and it has even been extolled by many who assume the title of moralists and philosophers, as the legitimate stimulus to every great exertion. It is, however, undeniable, that they who have been most under the influence of this principle, have more frequently been the scourges of the human race than its benefactors. Even where it has been the producing cause of effects beneficial to society, it may be doubted whether great praise was due to the performer of them. He who founds a beneficent institution from the love of the human race, and out of a compassionate desire to relieve the necessities of his fellow-creatures, well deserves all the glory that the blessings of grateful generations on his name can bestow : but he who, without truly caring for his fellow creatures, makes mere glory his object, scarcely deserves even this. At any rate, the highest Authority has declared, that he who does his alms to be seen of men, thus for the sake of glory, shall have no other reward than such glory can convey. Perhaps it may be with truth affirmed, that they whose ruling passion was the love of glory, never sought to obtain it by beneficent actions, except when circumstances precluded their hope of securing it by deeds of a more dazzling kind : at least, the latter would have their preference when equally practicable. The

honours of war and triumph—the subjugation of nations—the driving of the car of victory over prostrate foes :—these are the things most delightful in themselves to the mere seeker of glory. Glory was the idol so devotedly worshipped by an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Napoleon, and by all other conquerors : and cruel indeed have been the sacrifices by which they gained the favour of the demon. The Cynic philosopher, with equal pride, had not the means of obtaining glory by extending his possessions : he therefore sought it by affecting to despise them : in which the Hero of Macedon beheld a spirit so like his own, as to declare, that if he were not Alexander, he would be Diogenes.

In short, the love of glory, is merely one of the forms of selfishness or self-love. To ascribe then such a motive to the Deity, and to believe that the world was created purely to gratify it, is to adopt a persuasion only worthy of the darkness of paganism, or the blindness of infidelity. If Moloch or Lucifer could become a Creator, it doubtless would be from such a motive as this : and to ascribe this motive to the true God, is in reality to liken him to such spirits of darkness. No ! no ! such a selfish motive as this never prompted one act of the Father of the universe : much less could it prompt the world's creation. His precept to his faithful servants is, to do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again ; of course, not for glory : and surely it would be grossly libelling our Creator to suppose, that He requires a lower stimulus to his beneficent acts than he permits to so frail a creature as man. The builders of Babel, we are told, were stimulated by the love of glory : they said, "Go to, let us build us a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and *let us make us a name.*" To such aspirers, let us leave it. Such motive might well give rise to a Babel of confusion ; but never could it produce a universe of order.

Let us then again turn our eyes on the scenes of creation, and see if we cannot find written on them the traces of some other of the attributes of its Maker, beside his infinite power. Infinite power, indeed, must have been the instrument of its production ; but the mere display of this can never have been its end.

Now we cannot take even a slight inspection of the universal

frame, without being struck with the wonderful harmony and arrangement of all its parts; nothing in it being formed for itself alone, but so connected with the rest, as to contribute, in a higher or lower degree, to the welfare of the whole. The whole creation is a system of uses or utilities, so arranged as to produce, by the perfect union and adaption of the parts, not merely the general well-being of the whole, but also the particular well-being of all the parts; at least, if anything, at any time, disturbs any of the parts (although even such disturbing influences are so overruled as to contribute finally to the welfare of the whole,) the irregularity may be shown to arise from causes extrinsic to the main design, and to be only permitted in order to throw off something, which, if left to itself, would occasion far greater mischief.

We behold the mere globe of earth and water, inert and inactive in itself, yet affording a base upon which every thing else rests; and supplying nourishment, more immediately, to the vegetable kingdom. We behold, again, the vegetable kingdom, though destitute of any conscious life, and of course incapable of enjoying its own existence and beauties, yet ministering the means of subsistence and enjoyment to the animal kingdom; and even to man himself; who alone, while he enjoys the fruits which the vegetable kingdom offers for his support, is capable of reflecting on, and deriving delight from, its innumerable beauties. In like manner, the animal kingdom in general ministers most extensively to the necessities and comforts of man; the most noble of its subjects supplying him with food, clothing, any many other gifts; while those which immediately contribute nothing to his use, or even are felt by him as noxious; nevertheless, no doubt, contribute to the well-being of the whole system, and thus, however remotely, promote the comfort of man, the great (deputed) monarch of all. Even if it should be necessary to allow that some kinds of animals and vegetables are of no use at all (which however, I have no doubt, could be completely disproved,) still it must be remembered, that, by common consent, all things noxious, if they did not, as appears most probable, first begin to exist at the entry of sin into the world, at least did not till then acquire their injurious properties. While



man was in the paradisiacal state, doubtless, nothing existed at all which did not promote his comfort : and if, since his lapse into evil, elemental convulsions and noxious productions conspire to annoy him, still, doubtless, nothing of the kind exists but what originates in his depraved state : and natural evil is made to serve as a check to moral evil, and, whether we can always see the connexion or not, to prevent man from destroying himself, as to his capacity for eternal happiness, still more completely than has yet been accomplished by sin.

Leaving, however, at present, the existence of natural evil in the world to be explained as every individual may prefer, it is universally allowed that, taking the face of the whole world together, good is incomparably predominant over evil. If, for wise ends that we cannot always see, our harvests are sometimes destroyed by unfavourable seasons, and a tempest or an earthquake occasions a partial desolation, still it is most evident, that it is not merely to be the sport of such occurrences, that the world, and man, were created. Good, blessing, happiness ;—these are plainly the ends which the arrangement of the whole was designed to produce : evil, injury, misery are clearly accidents ;—such, probably, as cannot be separated from the state of man as a moral agent in a degenerate condition, but which evidently form no part of the universal plan. Good, most certainly, is the rule : evil, the exception. A distinguished writer has most justly observed, that although the human frame is liable to various distressing ills, yet there is no part of its complicated machinery purposely formed to produce them. Every part of the human body has evidently been constructed with a design to contribute to the welfare of the rest ; no part purposely to introduce disease. Health and well-being, then, are plainly the ends designed : sickness and pain are merely the exceptions. So it is with respect to the construction and arrangement of the whole creation : the welfare of all its parts, and the good and happiness of all its sentient inhabitants, are obviously the ends designed throughout the whole.

Whence then can this tendency to the good and happiness of the created subjects have been introduced into the whole of the creation, but from the attribute of Infinite Benevolence existing

in the Creator? Whence such admirable adaptation of the means to the end, but from Infinite Intelligence? Can more conclusive evidence be desired of the truth, that the two most essential attributes of the Divine Nature are Goodness and Truth, or Love and Wisdom,—Love to prompt to such a beneficent result,—Wisdom to arrange the means for its production?

God, then, most certainly, did not create the universe from the mere love of glory, which would be the love of Himself; but from that genuine love, that disinterested benevolence, which perpetually desires to confer blessings on others. The essence of all pure and disinterested love is, to love others, to desire to impart to them of what is one's own, and to contribute to their happiness: of which, degenerate as human nature now is, it still is capable of furnishing us with striking proofs. I will take an instance, from which may be seen, as in a mirror, the pure love of our Heavenly Father: and the example which I will select is that of parental love; the spontaneous birth of which in the parent's breast is alone sufficient to demonstrate, as with the light of a sun-beam, that Love is the most essential attribute of that Divine Being, from whom creation originated, and by whom it is preserved.

The helplessness of man in his infant state is proverbial. Unprovided by nature, like the inferior animals, with any clothing to guard him from the rigour of the elements, as well as incapable of procuring any sustenance, his birth into this world must be presently followed by his departure out of it, had not the benevolent Father of us all transfused into parents a love, that emulates, in its narrow sphere, his boundless love to his helpless children. As it is on its mother's care that the infant is more immediately dependant for the supply of its wants, it is in her breast that parental love most powerfully sheds abroad its sacred fire. Not only is she unremitting in the discharge of all the tender duties that are more suitable to her affectionate nature, but she is even capable, when her offspring is in danger, of forgetting the weakness and timidity natural to her sex; and instances are on record, in which females, endowed for the moment with a preternatural strength, the effect of ardent love in its highest state of excitement, have encountered with success,

in defence of their children, the ferocity and strength of the wolf and the lion.

Nor is it to the human race alone that the self-devotion inspired by this love is extended. The lower orders of creation experience it in a degree not less powerful than man: the only difference is, that, with them, it ceases as soon as their offspring cease to require their assistance; whilst, in human nature, it seldom terminates but with life. Accordingly, when under its influence, we see the weakest animals contend without fear with the strongest; and even the little bird will give all the annoyance in her power to the cruel spoiler of her nest. So universal, indeed, is the love of offspring, that its dominion is not confined to gentle breasts alone: but the harshest tempers among mankind, and the most ferocious among animals, all acknowledge its influence. The reason is, because Infinite Love, which was the moving cause of creation, also provides everything that is essential to the well-being of the things created. No man could live an instant without air; accordingly, there is no place on the globe from which air is excluded: and no infant could survive its birth without parental care; accordingly, there is no breast so savage as to be disinclined to afford it.

How plain then is the evidence which the universal diffusion of parental love bears to the unbounded nature of its prototype,—Love Divine! It is nothing but the most universal sphere of Divine Love, emanating, from the Lord, that infuses this principle, imitative of itself, into the breasts of all his sentient creatures: and in it He writes before our eyes, in characters too strongly marked to be easily mistaken, the truest description of his own nature. Herein He declares that his benevolence is unbounded; that He bears a regard truly paternal to all his rational offspring. How then, with such evidence before them, could men ever dream of any principle other than disinterested Love as reigning in the Divine Essence? How is it, that when they were assigning other motives for the production of the universe, or for God's dealings with men upon it, they were not silenced by that question of the Lord, drawn from the universality of parental love: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your

Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

God, then, being the author of the sublime, self-devoting affection known by the name of parental love ;—that love being, in fact, nothing but an emanation from his own inmost nature ; most plain it is that He must be love universal in its very essence ; and that all the communicating beatifying properties of the purest love must exist in Him in the most inconceivable purity and ardour, free from the most remote possibility of contamination from any selfish feeling, any self-regard. Now it certainly is not in the nature of genuine love to abide for ever alone : and here is the moving cause of creation. Neither could such love be gratified with the creation either of inanimate matter, or of brute animals, capable indeed of a sense of enjoyment suited to their nature, but not of reflecting upon it, or of connecting themselves, by a reciprocal affection, with the Source of all good, from whom all they enjoy, with their faculties for enjoying it, is derived. Love desires union and reciprocity with the objects of its regard. For this, a higher being was required, capable of feeling his Maker's love to him, and returning it : and therefore Man was created in God's image and likeness ; or with capacities for receiving the wisdom and love of his Creator, and of ascribing them to Him from whom they come.

Nothing then but the pure love of God can be justly assumed as the cause of the creation of the universe. Every inferior thing in the universe was created for the sake of man ; and man was created that God might have an object in which his love might delight itself,—in whom all his benevolent desire of imparting happiness might be gratified,—in whom He might dwell for ever, and with whom He might unite himself in the communication of ineffable joy, in the eternal regions of light, life, and love.

Such is the conclusion, on this great question, both of reason and Scripture ; and further proofs in abundance, could, if needful, easily be adduced. One is afforded by the passage which I have adopted as a text for this Lecture. It is part of the sublime glorification of the twenty-four elders, in which they say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power :

for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. We have already noticed, that the word here translated *pleasure*, is that, in the original, which properly means *will*;—"for thy will they are and were created." But what is God's will, or pleasure either, but his love? since whatever any being wills, *that* he loves, and what he loves, *that* he wills: so that, when it is said that all things were created for his will, it is the same thing as if it had been said that they were created for his love; or, that his love was the moving cause of all creation. But what love? the love of himself! the desire of his own glory! Or love properly so called—that pure, genuine, disinterested love, which, as we have seen, in a finite degree, He requires of his creatures,—the love which does good, hoping for nothing again,—the love, of which that of tender parents is a derivation, a form, and an image? The latter, most undoubtedly. This is apparent from the very form of the glorification: "Thou art *worthy*, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy will they are, and were created." What can this mean, but that he created us and all things out of pure love—with a sole view to the good of the beings created; and thus, for this disinterested display of love towards us, is to be held by us in the highest honour, reverence and love; which it were impossible to feel towards Him, if it was not *our* good, but solely his *own glory*, that He proposed in our creation.

That the Lord's will is pure love, is evident from the declaration of the Apostle Paul, when he says (1 Tim. ii. 4), that "God *will have* all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth;" where *will have*, according to the original, is simply *willeth*,—"God *willeth*,—or "*the will of God is*, that all men should be saved, and should come to a knowledge of the truth." To the same effect is the declaration of the Apostle Peter, [2, ii. 9], that "God *is not willing* that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." If then God's will or desire *is*, that all should be saved, notwithstanding their having fallen, it doubtless was his will or desire that all should enjoy happiness when first he created them. Consequently, pure love, a desire to behold intelligent creatures good and happy, was the sole

motive from which He became their Creator. This was his *will*, "*for which all things are, and were created.*"

If we believe, as, we have seen, is so generally supposed, that God created man for his own glory merely, we cannot wonder if, when man departed from his duty, God fell from His grace, as theologians have expressed it, and regarded the offender with such an implacability of wrath, as required such means to allay it as the same theologians describe; being such as could only be acceptable to a Being whose ruling motives were of the selfish character involved in the love of glory, and whose nature partook more of anger than of love; according to the notion considered in our last Lecture. But if we believe that love was the sole motive which influenced God in the creation of man,—that love is, indeed, the most essential attribute of the Divine Nature, to work out the ends designed by which all the others are put into exercise; then it will not be easy to imagine, that when man departed from God, God in resentment departed from him. It will rather be expected (what the whole testimony of the Divine Records evinces to be the fact) that the same love which created man for happiness at first, would provide the means, if any were possible, to win him back, after he had perversely relinquished his birthright, and recover him to happiness again. The unalterable benevolence of the Divine Nature, unbounded as it is, cannot, it is true, impart happiness to man, when he departs from the path in which alone happiness is to be found. It therefore affords no encouragement to man to pursue his vain imaginations, in the idle expectation that his Maker's love will not regard them, or can impart to him happiness after he has renounced the company of the graces with which alone happiness can dwell. It is only in a darkened state of mind that man can dream of separating happiness from goodness, or fancy that he can retain happiness when he turns from God who is its only Source.

But not to resume a branch of the subject sufficiently, perhaps, remarked upon in our last, conclude we with observing, that as God is Love itself, and from love created us, it is plain that love has always been the motive in the Divine Mind of all his dealings with us, and arrangements respecting us. In

order that we might be conscious subjects of his love, not unconscious receptacles of his bounties, like the brute beasts, he created us free,—moral agents, accountable for our use of the privileges conferred on us. Man has abused this greatest of privileges—his freedom,—and has fallen. The liability to fall was unavoidable, or he could neither have been made a rational nor an immortal creature—immortality, rationality, and liberty, being inseparable companions. But degenerate as man has thus become, the Lord has never ceased to desire his salvation. He does, and has done, all that Infinite Love, united with Infinite Wisdom, can do for his rescue. He follows him in his degraded state with fresh overtures of mercy,—adapts his aids and influences to his condition, pursues him through all the steps of his declension; and when he had declined so low that he could go no lower without ceasing to be a human being at all, the Lord actually assumed the human nature, that, by combating and subduing all the evils with which, in this state, human nature was defiled,—suffering and being tempted, as the Apostle affirms, that he might know how to succour them that are tempted, He became a Redeemer and Saviour. This is the grand climax of the Lord's divine love, the second grand display of that Infinite Love, of which creation was the first. This we shall consider in future Lectures. Looking unto Him, as the Saviour and Redeemer, we may recover from the ruins of the fall, and may attain, through the Redemption wrought for us, a state of security, superior far to that of Adam at his first creation. And the way to realize this is, to walk in the path in which, while on earth He walked before us; as He commanded, to follow Him, in a life of faith, love, and obedience; to be imitators, according to our feeble capacities, of His excellent perfections; and, by loving and cultivating that love and good which He most essentially is, to regain, in some acceptable degree, His image and likeness; when we shall be exalted to dwell with Him, our gracious Creator, Saviour, and Prototype, in glory everlasting, and shall ever delight in adoring that Infinite Love, which was the moving cause of our creation.

## LECTURE V.

**THE ABSOLUTE UNITY, BOTH IN ESSENCE AND PERSON, OF THE  
DIVINE OBJECT OF WORSHIP; AND THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE  
OF THE TRINITY, AS BEING IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH SUCH  
ABSOLUTE UNITY.**

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**MARK xii. 32, (latter part.)**

*"There is one God, and there is none other but He."*

OF all the valuable endowments and privileges which are bestowed on man by creation, this is the most precious, and the most distinguishing:—that he is capable of rising to the contemplation of God. This, perhaps, may not at first sight be obvious to all; but yet it is most certainly the truth. By some, the faculty of rationality may be deemed the most admirable, and it is commonly regarded as the most distinguishing, of human endowments. By others, the gift of immortality, with the capacity of enjoying eternal happiness, is thought the most excellent privilege conferred upon man by creation. Most admirable, most excellent, most highly to be prized, are, certainly, these two extraordinary privileges attached to human nature; and, most unquestionably, they all are distinguishing ones, also; since, without them all, man would not be man: Yet, if the cause is to be esteemed higher in order, and thence more excellent in itself, than the effect, the possession of a mind which is capable of rising to the contemplation of God, of conceiving, even, the bare idea of God, is an endowment more excellent, more exalted, more distinguishing still: for it is from this capacity that man derives the faculty of rationality, and the gift of immortality. It was a truly sagacious observation of the celebrated founder of Methodism, that the proper definition of man is, "A being capable of God." Because man is capable of knowing God,



whether he ever does know Him, or think justly respecting Him, or not, he possesses the endowment of rationality, and can reason analytically, and draw rational conclusions, respecting all other subjects : and because he is capable of loving God, and of being conjoined or united with Him by love, whether he ever does enter into such connexion with Him, or not, he possesses the endowment of immortality, and lives for ever.

Man, then, having the capacity of rising in contemplation to the Author of his being, of knowing and loving his God ; and this being also the most excellent of all the high endowments of his nature ; is he to let so eminently distinguishing a faculty lie dormant within him, and, as if he were born a mere animal, which has not the power of thinking of its Maker, shun the contemplation of that subject, to which he alone is capable of rising, and on which it must be so important for him to exercise the faculties with which he is endowed for that very purpose ? If he has the capacity of knowing his God, is it not most important that he should conceive of Him aright ? Is he to regard the knowledge of God as an utterly unfathomable mystery, and be content with the bare acknowledgment of His existence, without attaching to it any ideas ?

The knowledge of God, or the things to be known respecting Him, may be divided, in the most general way, into two branches, —the one comprising such truths as relate to his nature, and the other such as relate to his person. Respecting his Essential Nature, we engaged in an inquiry in our two last Lectures ; in which we endeavoured to show, that He is Love itself and Wisdom itself, and that all his attributes have reference to these as the fundamental and universal of all. Now we will attempt the inquiry respecting his Person, and consider whether the attributes of infinite love and wisdom which constitute his nature, belong solely to one person, or are divided among more. More expressly, the subject of the present Lecture shall be, *The Absolute Unity, both in Essence and Person, of the Divine Object of worship : and the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, as being in perfect harmony with such Absolute Unity.* Thus our present subject relates both to the Person and to the Essence of Deity. In affirming his Absolute Unity, we, in fact, affirm his Indivisibility ;

which, if it exists in him at all, is one of the attributes of his Essential Nature.

But, before proceeding to the investigation of this exalted subject, permit me, my respected friends, to solicit your candour, and your unprejudiced consideration of what I may be enabled to offer. On this subject, our views, which we most sincerely believe to be those of the true Christian religion, differ very greatly from those of every other denomination of Christians existing in the present day; and therefore, if any judge of us, not from the Word of God itself, and the corroborative testimony of reason, but from any preconceived system, the decision will be unfavourable: but if they judge of us from the evidence of Scripture and the light of truth itself, we think we have no cause to fear the result. It is my wish to avoid giving offence to any: and I trust no lover of truth will take offence at anything I may offer, merely because it differs from the views which he may have entertained before. In much that I shall lay before you, I also am quite sure of your suffrages. I shall perhaps be thought to be proving points so plain in themselves as to require no proof whatever; and most, perhaps all of you, will think, that what I am saying differs in nothing from what you have always believed. You will think, also, while attending to great part of this Lecture, that the creed or articles of faith of your respective churches fully accord with all that I am advancing. I know that they do ~~in~~ words; but they contain other sentiments which evince, that those words were not intended, by the framers of the creeds, to be understood in the strict sense which the truth itself requires. In listening to our sentiments, as well as in considering the views of others, I wish you to be on your guard against being deceived: but I trust you will keep your eyes and minds open for the discernment and admission of truth and, if you should see the truth in anything that I may offer, that you will not be displeased with it for coming in a form somewhat different from what you have been accustomed to regard it as assuming. And as the subject is of vast importance, and of the most holy as well as the most elevated nature, let us all elevate our minds to the Father of lights, and endeavour to keep them in such a state, as that He can be near us, and be our guide.

In announcing the subject of this Lecture, as being on *The Absolute Unity both in Essence and Person, of the Divine Object of worship*, I felt somewhat apprehensive lest it might be supposed, that the sentiments to be offered were those of Unitarianism; and it was to guard against this that I united another subject with it, and proposed to treat also of *The Scripture doctrine of the Trinity*. It is not our wish to treat either Trinitarians or Unitarians with disrespect; though, we think they have both, in very different ways, departed from the doctrines of Divine Truth. But each party has framed its sentiments with a view to preserve inviolate, respectively, one most important Scripture doctrine. All that is properly implied in the word *Unitarianism*, which is, *the absolute Unity of the Divine Essence and Person*, and all that is properly implied in the word *Trinitarianism*, which is, *the existence of a Trinity in the Divine Nature*, is, we believe, equally the doctrine of the True Christian Religion: but the parties respectively called Unitarians and Trinitarians have each mixed these truths with what, we believe, is not at all consistent with the true Christian Religion. To establish the Scripture doctrine of the Absolute Unity of the Divine Essence and Person, which in itself is most true, Unitarians, as we conceive, have violated all Scripture truth, by denying the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. To establish the Scripture doctrines of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and of a trinity in the Divine Nature, also, in themselves, most true Trinitarians, as we conceive, have departed from Scripture truth by dividing the Divine Unity among three separate persons. Now each of these parties cannot but be aware, that, in one point, when brought to the touchstone of the Word of God, their systems are very weak. The Unitarian must feel, that, in denying the Divinity of Jesus Christ, he is obliged to give very violent explanations of many passages of Scripture, and to expunge, without any reasonable warrant, various chapters and passages from the Sacred Record. The Trinitarian, again must be conscious, that, in making the trinity to consist of three separate persons, he is sadly annoyed by the positiveness of the passages which assert the Divine Unity, and is contradicted by them at every step. If, then, both Unitarians and Trinitarians could be presented

with a system which asserts the main points contended for by each party, free from the difficulties which render them weak when attacked by the other, they surely would hail it as a most acceptable relief. Such is that which we offer. Our system of Scripture doctrine, is pure *Trinitarianism*, though not that held by Trinitarians in general, whom I would rather call *Tripersonalists*; and it is pure *Unitarianism* also, though quite different from that held by Unitarians in general, whom I would rather call *Psilanthropists*. And it harmonizes with all the classes of passages on both subjects contained in the Word of God: the whole Bible does not afford one text which our system does not assume and explain. If these statements shall appear to be well founded, then, surely, both Trinitarians and Unitarians, if they are at the same time lovers of truth, may receive with favour the view presented. And as the view which we accept upon the subject as that of the True Christian Religion, is, at the same time, in perfect harmony with the purest reason, and quite removes the contradiction by many supposed to exist between the dictates of reason and the doctrines of Christianity, the Deist also, so far as his objections to Christianity only arise from its imputed variance with reason, ought to view it with approbation, and to acknowledge that, thus exhibited, all plausible objections to the truth of the Christian Religion are at an end.

Such is what we promise. Such, we most entirely believe, is the true character of the system of doctrine respecting the Divine Being and Person which we have received. Whether it truly deserves this character, I proceed, as far as my feeble abilities will permit, to enable you to judge for yourselves. First, then, I propose to inquire, what is the evidence of *Reason* on the subject of *The Absolute Unity of the Divine Object of Worship*. In the second place, we will examine what is, upon this subject, the testimony of *Scripture*. And, lastly, we will state what we understand to be *The Scripture doctrine of the Trinity*, and show that it is strictly in agreement with the doctrine of the most Absolute Unity.

With respect then to the first of these subjects—*The Absolute Unity of the Divine Object of Worship*;—or *The Indivisible Oneness of the Divine Nature and Person*. This great truth might

be concluded from this circumstance alone,—the wonderful unity of design, so plainly observable throughout the universe of creation, and the undeviating regularity with which all the parts of the great machine, move in, and fill up, the station assigned them. We cannot lift our thoughts to the contemplation of the order so manifestly evident through all the ranks of created existence, from the immense bodies, which under the name of stars and planets, but which in reality are suns and earths, perform their revolutions through the boundless plains of ether, to the minutest species of moss that vegetates on the mountains of the north,—or even to the grain of sand which fills its appointed place, and performs its destined uses, on the margin of the ocean,—without feeling that, in reason's ear they not only perpetually exclaim, "The hand that made us is divine," but that they also perpetually declare, "We all obey the behests of One Presiding Mind." Even under the darkness of heathenism, when deities of different ranks were assigned to every province of nature; when not only one superior intelligence was supposed to preside over the sun and another over the moon,—one over the air and another over the ocean;—but when the taste for multiplying objects of adoration went so far, that every rill of water had its Naiad and every tree of the forest its Dryad, and it was supposed to be necessary, in whatever foreign country or new town or district men might visit, to pay due honor to the *Genius Loci*—the celestial Guardian of the place;—even in the midst of this darkness it still was seen, that if these divinities were upon a footing of equality,—if, as the Athanasian Creed affirms of its three Persons, they were "in glory equal, in majesty co-eternal,"—the utmost confusion must unavoidably be the consequence: and therefore, amid all their wanderings from the dictates of pure Divine Truth, the ancient heathens allowed all these to be merely subordinate in their functions, and acknowledged but One Supreme,—“the Father,”—as their most admired writers denominate their Jove,—“the Father of gods and men.”

That there can be but One Presiding Mind to regulate the course of such a structure as the universe, and that, otherwise, the preservation of the whole and orderly disposal of its innumerable parts would be impossible,—is evident indeed from what

we see to be the case with the inconsiderable empires and states of this globe; the preservation of which would be manifestly impracticable, if each of them were placed under more than one governing power. In some states, it is true, the government is not centered in a single individual: yet, even in the most popular republic, the governing *power* is but *one*,—the individuals who compose it not being governors singly, but only in their collective capacity,—being themselves, as individuals, subject to the governing power, and amenable to its laws. But though the government may thus be *Δ one*, and capable, in consequence, of upholding the state, where the individuals composing it are many; still, the improvement which has taken place in political knowledge has long convinced even the most strenuous advocates for liberty, that such political constitutions have generally a tendency to fall into anarchy, and are at all times in some measure inadequate to the purposes of an efficient government, from their inability to act with that promptitude which sudden emergencies require, and without a capacity for which a state must often be exposed to destruction. Hence, in the freest and best constituted governments at present on the globe, such as that of our own country, and of the United States of America, it has been found expedient to guard against the evils of mere democracy by giving a head to the government itself in the person of a single individual, whether that individual be denominated a President or a King. Far be it from me to say anything in favour of despotic power, yet it is impossible for the most uncompromising enemy of despotic power to deny, that if infallible wisdom and incorruptible virtue could be found in human nature, and were always inherent in the possessor of a throne, then absolute monarchy would be the most perfect of governments. It is only because human nature is always weak, and too generally wicked, that despotism is commonly synonymous with tyranny. It is only because unbounded power is usually attended with a disposition to abuse it, and always with inability to administer it with perfect wisdom, that it has been found so advantageous, in the best political constitutions to limit the authority, and assist the understanding, of the sovereign, by a council selected from the people.

It is demonstrable, then, that, without unity in the govern-

ment, to a certain extent, the most inconsiderable state could not subsist: It is equally certain, that, for the subsistence of large states, it is necessary that this unity should be very closely concentrated: How then can it be imagined, with the slightest plausibility, that such a government as that of the universe could be carried on a moment, if the reins of it were held by more hands than one! If nothing but the frailty inseparable from a finite, and especially from a fallen creature, prevents the government of one individual from being the most perfect on earth, can we suppose that He who is Infinite in himself and in all his attributes,—infinite in goodness and in wisdom as well as infinite in power,—can be the subject of deficiencies requiring to be supplied by a council of his equals? Well may the Word of divine inspiration, speaking the language of the purest reason, reject such an imagination as in the highest degree absurd. “Who,” says Jehovah by his prophet Isaiah, [ch. xl. 13, 14,] “Who hath directed the spirit (that is, the mind) of the Lord” (—for that it is *Jehovah himself* who is here spoken of, and not any *Spirit of God* as a distinct person, is evident from the whole context:—“Who hath directed the spirit (or mind) of the Lord)? or, being his counsellor, hath taught Him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and showed Him the way of understanding?” Indeed, the supposition is absurd upon another account. For only look at this obvious truth. If there were more Divine Personal Beings than one concerned in the government of the universe, and each took a share in the counsels necessary for this purpose, it is evident that neither of them could be possessed of Infinite wisdom. *Infinite* wisdom includes *all* wisdom; which cannot possibly be assisted by consultation with another. If neither of the Divine Governors possessed infinite wisdom by himself, it is evident that neither could they be in the enjoyment of infinite wisdom unitedly: for add finite to finite as long as you please, and the sum of the whole will never be infinite, nor bear any proportion to it. Such are the inconsistencies into which men must ever fall, when they depart from the idea of unity of Person in the Divine Being,—when they cease to regard Him as an Indivisible One, in Person as well as in Essence.

Abundantly more considerations of this nature, drawn from what is observable in the order of created things, which reason readily discerns to be true, might easily be offered : but we forbear to urge them, since many distrust the conclusions of reason on such subjects. And justly do they distrust them ; since, as before noticed, what is called the light of nature, is by no means an infallible guide. It must, however, be observed at the same time, that reason is capable of being enlightened by a light of a higher order than that of nature ; since, together with the life which continually flows into man from the Lord, there enters a sort of internal dictate leading to the acknowledgment of such truths as are most essential to salvation, especially that great truth of all, that God is One. This is a truth which every one, by virtue of this internal dictate from heaven, though he might not have discovered it himself, acknowledges as soon as he hears it, unless his mind has previously been hardened, and rendered incapable of discerning the light when presented, by the confirmation of an erroneous belief : and it is from this cause that reason so readily admits, and can so strongly confirm it. However, as reason, of itself, is by no means an infallible guide, and ought never to be relied on in matters of such extreme importance as that now before us, unless dictates be strengthened by the most express declarations of Holy Writ, we will turn to the second branch of our inquiry, and examine what is the testimony of Scripture.

It might be sufficient to satisfy the impartial mind, that the dictates of reason and the declarations of Scripture are here in perfect unison, only to notice the terms in which God himself commands us to acknowledge and worship him in the first commandment : “I am the Lord thy God :—thou shalt have no other gods before me.” How is this to be understood upon the supposition of there being more Divine Persons than one, “in glory equal, in majesty co-eternal ?” Are we (for this is the only way in which, upon such a supposition, the words can be understood at all :—Are we) to conceive that all the three Persons are here speaking as it were with one mouth, so that when we are prohibited from worshipping any *other* gods, the meaning is, any others *besides these three* ? But how is this reconcilable with the



use of the singular personal pronoun in both its cases—" *I* am the Lord thy God ;—thou shalt have no other gods before *Me*"? what language was ever known, in which it was customary to speak of a plurality of persons as comprehended in the pronoun *I*? The thought that there can here be any allusion to more Divine Persons than One, or that more persons than one could announce themselves by such a mode of speech, could never enter the conceptions of any unsophisticated mind. Indeed, the same may be said of every instance in which the Lord solemnly communicates himself to his church, in this direct mode of address, throughout the Scriptures of the Old Testament: It is always "*I* the Lord," that is, according to the original, "*I* Jehovah." Indeed, the name "*Jehovah*," which is what the Lord constantly takes as his proper name, and which is the only proper name that he bears in the Old Testament, is a noun in the singular number; which would be a solecism indeed, unless applied to a Being of the most absolute indivisibility.

But probably some of my hearers, who are acquainted with what the defenders of a Tripersonality advance in support of their sentiments, will think that this may be answered by the remark so often urged by Trinitarian writers, that although the word *Jehovah*, here used in the original, is a noun in the singular number, the word *Elohim*, in the original, which is what we translate God, is in the plural number, and that this has reference to the three persons of the Trinity.

To this it may be briefly replied, That the Word *Elohim* is like many words in the ancient languages which have no singular number, and in which, therefore, though the form is plural, the sense may be either singular or plural as the context requires. It is true that this word has a singular form; but this occurs very seldom, there not being more than sixteen instances of it in the whole Bible, if we exclude the book of Job, the style of which is in other respects very different from that of the Jewish Scriptures; whilst in the plural form it is used not fewer than two thousand five hundred times; and very learned Hebraists have concluded from this circumstance, that originally it had no singular form at all, and that the singular form was introduced in the few cases mentioned to adapt it to the metre,

it being always in parts which are evidently of a poetical nature that it so occurs. But if the circumstance of its having a singular form in the few instances alluded to might seem to render it different from the words in the ancient languages, which, though plural in form are singular in sense, this is more than counter-balanced by a fact, which does not take place in other languages, in which, if the form of a noun be plural, though the sense may be singular, the verbs and other parts of speech dependent on it are plural also: whereas the verbs and other parts of speech dependent on the word *Elohim*, and which, according to the laws of universal grammar, ought to agree with it in number, are, except in a very few instances of a peculiar nature, invariably in the singular number: a circumstance which demonstrates, that, notwithstanding the plural form of this word, the meaning attached to it is singular. In the second place this follows from the circumstance, that it is often used in cases where the most devoted Tripersonalist must allow that no trinity of persons is referred to. Thus the golden calf made for the apostate Israelites by Aaron, which was certainly one single thing, is called by him their *Elohim*. The case is the same with Dagon the idol of the Philistines, which also was one single thing: and so it is said of Moses, who certainly had but one person, that he should be as *Elohim* to Pharaoh; so that if the word *Elohim* has any reference to a Trinity, it could be to no other kind of Trinity than that which existed in Moses, and which exists in every individual man. If the word be allowed to have a plural import, its reference certainly must be to the boundless infinitude of distinct perfections which all allow to have a place in the Divine Nature: but it must ever be impossible to show that a word which at most only conveys a general idea of plurality, can have any specific application to a trinity: accordingly, the most accomplished masters of the Hebrew language, and amongst them many who were strongly attached to the tripersonal doctrine, including Calvin himself,—have allowed that it is futile to attempt to deduce that doctrine from this word. None can have recourse to this argument but such as either know little of Hebrew, or are so sensible of the weakness of the sentiment which yet they are resolved at all events to uphold, as to catch at any shadow of

an argument in its favour. But to enter into a lengthened critical disquisition on a point of Hebrew grammar would be here out of place : otherwise many arguments might be adduced to show that the form of this word has nothing to do with the doctrine of a trinity of Persons. But without any such critical disquisition, surely every impartial mind must feel, that some stronger proof than a mere grammatical nicety, which few could understand, would be requisite to convince any reasonable person, that *I* and *Me*, in the first commandment, are really equivalent to *We* and *Us*, and to satisfy the mind that the solemn prohibition here given of the worship of any other god than the true one, ought not to have been accompanied with some notice, if the fact were true, that "in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons." Every untutored mind must unavoidably conceive, that three separate Divine Persons can be no other than three separate Gods ; and that the worship of at least two of them must be forbidden by the injunction, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Proceed we then to notice some passages in which the announcement of the strict unity of the Godhead is more express still.

What can be more exclusive than the manner in which the nature of God, in regard to his Unity, is declared in the commandment which enforces the duty of loving Him above all things ? "Hear, O Israel," says the inspired lawgiver ; "the Lord thy God is One Lord." Is there any possible ambiguity in such language as this ? If there were, would not the Lord Jesus Christ, who in so many instances explains the true design of the Mosaic laws, have guarded against the misconception of this, when a direct opportunity presented itself for his doing so ? And yet, when asked which was the first commandment of all, as Mark relates the history, he repeated the very words of Moses, saying, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel ; the Lord our God is one Lord ; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Indeed, in the Greek of the New Testament recording the words of our Lord, the precept is if possible less liable to misinterpretation than in the Hebrew of

Moses. For in the Hebrew, the word for God is here, again, *Elohim*, the form of which, whatever the sense may be, is plural, and on which some, as we have noticed, build an argument for the Trinity of Persons. But this is given by the Lord, or by the evangelist writing by inspiration from Him, by the common Greek word for God—*Theos*; which, like the corresponding word in English, is in the singular number. It were strange indeed, if the word *Elohim* really involved the mysterious meaning so gratuitously ascribed to it, that all trace of it should disappear on translating it into Greek. Thus this passage, as given in the New Testament, affords so demonstrative a proof of the pure oneness of the Divine Being as is open to no evasion whatsoever. The scribe, also, to whom these words were addressed by Jesus, repeated them after him, as we have read in our text, with more emphasis still: “for he said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is *one* God, and there is *none* other but he:” and it is recorded of Jesus, that, so far from disapproving of this statement of the doctrine, He “saw that he answered discreetly.” Indeed, this is the doctrine which is constantly taught by the Lord and his Apostles. He said on another occasion, “There is none good but *one*, that is, God.” Paul declares repeatedly that “there is *one* God:” and James says, “Thou believest that there is *one* God: thou doest well.”

The same great truth is also repeatedly propounded in the negative form. Moses says to Israel, respecting the wonders wrought by the Lord in Egypt, [Deut. iv. 34,] “Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord, *he* is God: there is *none* beside *him*:” which he presently repeats in this solemn form: “Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that the Lord, *he* is God, in heaven above, and upon the earth, beneath: there is *none else*.” So Hannah says in her prayer, [1 Sam. ii. 2,] “There is none holy as the Lord: there is *none* beside thee.” Solomon, also, in his dedication prayer, desires “that all the people of the earth may know, that the Lord is God, and that there is *none else*.” But with what majesty does Jehovah himself declare the same truth by his prophet Isaiah! [ch. xlv. 5, 6,] “I am the Lord, and there is *none else*:—that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west,

that there is *none beside me*. I am the Lord, and *there is none else*." Again, [ver. 14 :] "They shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee, and *there is none else*." Again, [ver. 18 :] "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it: he established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and *there is none else*." Again, [ver. 21, 22 :] "Who hath declared this from ancient time? have not I the Lord? and there is *no God else beside me*; a just God and a Saviour, there is *none beside me*. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for *I am God*, and *there is none else*." Again, [xlvi. 9 :] "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and *there is none else*: I am God, and there is *none like me*." The like assertions are made elsewhere, with a little variety in the expression; as [xlii. 8,] "I am the Lord: that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another." "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me: I, even I, am the Lord: and *beside me there is no Saviour*" [xliii. 10, 11.] "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and *beside me there is no God*" [xliv. 6.] "Is there a *God beside me*? yea, *there is no God*: I know not any," [ver. 3.] "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb: I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens *alone*, that spreadeth abroad the earth *by myself*," [ver. 25.] We have before seen, that, according to the testimony of the Lord by this prophet, there is no participator in the divine counsels: so here we see that there is no participator in the divine works, either of creation or of redemption. Here is mention of the different offices which the Lord performs for his people; but no mention of a parcelling out of those offices among different Divine Persons. Jehovah declares that he performs the whole—*alone—by himself*; and this because *He alone is the God of heaven and earth*. Can testimony be more express? What subtilties can be devised to overthrow the evidence of such passages as these, and to make us conclude, that when God constantly declares that He is One, we are to interpret that One to mean Three?

It is utterly impossible then, we surely may affirm, to understand the testimony now adduced in any other way, than as inculcating the most unequivocal oneness in the Divine Nature; and as being utterly incompatible with any notion of a Trinity which requires more than one Person to contain it. I know that these arguments are usually met by passages which make mention of a Divine Trinity—not of the word, indeed, but of the thing,—of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: but texts of this description do not, in reality, impugn, in the slightest degree, the doctrine of those which I have now been quoting. The New Jerusalem Church by no means disowns the truly Scriptural doctrine of a Trinity in the Divine Nature; since it is impossible to read many passages of the New Testament without seeing it laid down in the most incontrovertible manner: nor, where we so plainly find the *thing*, are we disposed to quarrel with the convenient term which has been invented to express it. What we conceive to be unscriptural, is the notion of a Trinity of *Persons*; which we cannot find either mentioned or implied. When Jesus so repeatedly declares that the Father dwells *in Him*, reproves any inquiry after the Father *out of Him*, and so plainly shows by the significant action of *breathing* on the disciples, that the Holy Spirit is a divine influence *Proceeding from Him*; we plainly see that the Divine Trinity centres in his single Glorified Person: and until we can suppose that one Divine Person can actually dwell *in another*, and a third *issue from the second in the shape of breath*, we cannot conclude that the Trinity of the Scriptures is a Trinity of Persons.

Here then we come to the consideration of the other subject proposed for inquiry in this Lecture, which is, *The Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, as being in perfect harmony with that of the Absolute Unity*. Much, however, that we shall have to offer in our next Lecture but one, and in some of the subsequent ones, will tend to the elucidation of this important doctrine: wherefore, as time also demands, a few observations on it will be sufficient for the present. As observed at the commencement, I connected the question of the Divine Trinity with this of the Absolute Unity, lest it might be supposed, from the bare announcement of such a subject, that the Divine Unity to be contended for was such a

Unity as excludes a Trinity: whereas the Unity which is acknowledged by the doctrines which we believe to be those of the true Christian Religion, is such a Unity as comprehends a Trinity, and the God whom we worship is properly, we glory in acknowledging, the Triune God.

What then we object to, and what we invite you to exercise your best rational faculties, enlightened by the Word of God, in deciding upon, is, not the *Trinity*, which the Scripture unquestionably ascribes to God, but the *Tripersonality*, which is now here ascribed to Him but in creeds of mere human invention. It is possible to conceive of a real Trinity as existing in the Divine Nature, without finding the subject at all incomprehensible, or its being even involved in any obscure mystery whatever: but to conceive of three separate persons as existing in the Divine Nature, "each of whom by himself," as the Athanasian Creed positively declares, is God and Lord,"—this is something incomprehensible,—this is a mystery, an inextricable mystery indeed.

The scholastic definition of a *person* is, "An individual substance of a rational nature;" and by a substance they mean, a being capable of subsisting by itself. According to this definition only three kinds of beings can properly be called *persons*, because only three kinds of beings are considered to have a rational nature; and these are, men, angels, God. Applied then to the first of these orders of beings, or that of men, three *persons* are three *men*. Applied to the second of these orders, or that of angels, three *persons* are three *angels*. Applied then to the third order of these beings, which is God, *what are three persons?* It is indeed incomprehensibility, yea, it is contradiction itself, to say, that *three Divine Persons* are but *One God*. Well may they who maintain this proposition have recourse to the plea of mystery: well may they say it is a subject which human reason is unable to know or understand! But where is the sanction for this plea to be found in the Word of God? Where is it therein declared that the Doctrine of a Trinity in the Divine Nature is incomprehensible? Where is it even affirmed that the Trinity is a mystery? Let theologians produce one passage to this effect, and we will allow them to make the

mystery as intricate and as incomprehensible as they please: but they cannot find for it a single text throughout the Bible. In one respect, indeed, the knowledge of God is declared to be a mystery. "Great," says the Apostle, is the mystery of godliness," [1 Tim. iii. 16,] meaning by godliness, the knowledge of God and his dealings: but does he say this of the Trinity of three persons in One God? No! but of the incarnation of the one only God in the person of Jesus Christ. "Great," says he, "is the mystery of godliness: God (God himself, mind, the Only God) was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The assumption of Humanity by God himself may justly be called a mystery,—miracle, as it was, of Divine Goodness and power: but never is the Trinity in the Divine Nature represented as a mystery: and if it were, according to the testimony of Jesus Christ himself, there is no heavenly mystery which is altogether unrevealed to his true Church. "To you," saith he to the disciples, "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others, in parables, that seeing they might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand." How can one remember this divine declaration without being lost in astonishment at those, who, calling themselves the disciples of Jesus Christ, are perpetually resorting to the plea of mystery to cover incomprehensibilities which none but themselves have created; when *not* understanding is designated by the Lord himself as a mark of those who are *without*,—who are *not* his disciples.

Suffice it then at present to say, till we take up the subject of the Trinity again in our following Lectures, that a certain key to its true nature is to be found in the Scripture record of the creation of man: for he, we are assured, was created in the image and likeness of God. Has man then three persons? No such monster was ever heard of, except in some of the fictions of the heathen mythology. One of the giants said to have been slain by Hercules was a being of this description: But, most certainly, no man was ever really created having three persons: yet man, we are positively assured, was created in the image and likeness of God. The Trinity, then, we may be certain, does not consist



of three separate persons, which could be nothing less than a trinity of three separate gods ; but of three Essentials of the Divine Nature constituting together One Person. Man, the image of God, has three such essentials ; which are, his soul, his body, and the proceeding influence and operation exercised by both in union. These, it is plain, do not constitute him three persons, but one ; and it is equally evident that if either of them were taken away, he could not be a human being, a man, at all. It is true that the material body is laid aside at death ; but the man does not the less continue to exist in a real body, though this then consists of spiritual substance, and not of material, as before—as is evident from the case of Moses and Elias seen at the Lord's transfiguration :—he still, likewise, continues to possess a soul within his outward form, as before : for he still continues to have will and thought, or a mind with all its operations : and the seat of these, either with the spiritual or the material human being, is not in the outer covering or body, but in a hidden soul within. So, also, he still continues to have influence and operation ; though the scene of these is not in the natural world, as before, but in the spiritual. Thus a trinity of constituent principles is essential to man, in order to his existing as a man, in every stage of his being :—the reason is, because man is created in the image and likeness of God ; and thus possesses a trinity in himself, as a copy of that which exists in his Maker. He could not be an image of God, unless there existed in him a finite resemblance of all that exists infinitely in his Maker : if then his Maker had more persons than One, so also must man : if man, though containing a trinity in himself of essential constituent principles, possesses this trinity in one single person, so, also, we may be assured, does God.

To this I will only add at present, that though a *person* has been defined by the schoolmen and theologians of the middle ages to be *an individual substance*, or being subsisting by itself, *of a rational nature*, this was not its customary meaning when first applied to the distinctions in the Divine Nature. Our word *person* is taken from the Latin word *persona* ; which originally meant nothing but the mask worn by the ancient actors to give them an expression suited to the nature of the *characters* they

were to personate. Thus, when used figuratively, the word meant, not a separately subsisting being, but a *distinct character*: and in this its proper sense it might with accuracy be applied to such a Trinity as does truly exist in the Divine Object of worship.

In what has now been attempted to be set before you, I trust it may in some degree have been made manifest, that the statement with which I set out is well-founded,—that the view which we receive as the doctrine of the True Christian Religion upon the important subject of the Divine Unity and Trinity, combines in its behalf the whole testimony of Scripture, at the same time that it is in agreement with the perceptions of the purest reason. According as this is its real character, may it recommend itself to the mind of every sincere lover of truth and goodness, with whatsoever denomination of religious profession he may heretofore have been connected! And may the blessing of the God of all truth and goodness go with it, sealing it to the eternal benefit of many souls! I will only add, that if God is but One, how is the whole theory of religion simplified! If we have only one God to please, what can we have to do, but to exercise faith in Him as revealed to us in his Word, and to comply with the commandments which he has there delivered for our guidance? And to what do these amount? What does the Lord our God therein require of us? He himself has asked and answered, in that brief and pathetic declaration, “What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Himself assumed our nature, and therein accomplished the work of redemption, to enable us to comply with these simple requisitions; and if we look to Him, and act accordingly, He will assuredly beatify us with life everlasting.

## LECTURE VI.

THE PROPER PERSONALITY, AND THE DIVINE FORM OF THE  
LORD OUR GOD.

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GEN. i. 26.

*"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."*

THE contemplation of the nature of our Creator Almighty, as this is presented to us in the only way in which we could hope to obtain any adequate conceptions of it, even as revealed by Himself in his Holy Word, is unquestionably, the highest exercise of the human mind: and to possess right ideas respecting it, is of the most momentous importance to human beings,—to beings who, not only, like all other creatures, are called into existence by him, but who, differently from all others, are destined to live to eternity, and to find that eternal state either happy or miserable, according as we have conciliated the favour, or have neglected to do so, of this Omnipotent Being. There is no relation which a man can have with any of his fellow-creatures so close as that which connects him with the Great Author of his existence. Neither a man's human parents, nor his children, are in reality so near to him, as is the Almighty Father of his being; whose child he is, considered merely as a man; and whose child, in a still more endearing sense, he is destined to become, if he fulfils the end for which he was called into being. Well then may it be said, in every point of view, whether we regard the sublimity of the subject itself, or our own intimate connexion with it, that a just knowledge of our God is the highest attainment which the human mind can make, and ought to be sought with the deepest interest by every rational being. In particular, it forms the first link in the whole chain of theological

truths, which all depend upon this as their chief, and which, without this, would be nothing.

We have already considered, in previous Lectures, the Essential Nature of the Divine Object of Worship, and his Absolute Unity considered in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity ; on which last subject, we found that much light is thrown by the passage which I have now read as a text. But before we proceed to answer the question as to who God is, another important subject, relating to his Essential Nature, may worthily occupy our attention.

Among the more universal of the attributes of the Divine Being may justly be reckoned that of his Personality—his sustaining the character which we unavoidably think of when we contemplate Him as a Person ; that is, as a Being that exists distinctly from all others, and with a consciousness in himself of his own existence. Herein consists the grand difference between the believers in Divine Revelation, or those who thence take their conceptions of the Divine Nature, and many who are called Deists, with all classes of Atheists. Some Deists, indeed, do include the idea of Personality in their conception of the Divine Nature : but many who take the name, exclude from their idea of God every attribute from which he can be viewed as a Person, regarding him only as an inmost principle of life pervading all the forms of nature, imparting life to all things which possess that attribute, sustaining the existence of all inanimate objects likewise, and producing all the effects which are discoverable in the various kingdoms and provinces of the universe ; yet not having itself a distinctly conscious being, or any consciousness whatever separate from that of man and other sentient existences. They, however, who claim the name of Deists, or believers in God, and yet retain no higher an idea of God than this, are justly to be classed with Atheists, how loudly soever they may disown the title. For to retain the name of God and yet not to regard Him as a Person,—not to allow Him a distinct and proper Personality,—is to deny Him altogether : it is to make Him a mere thing, no more approaching to the idea involved in the sacred word “ God,” than the air surrounding the globe, or the gases evolved from the substances in its bowels, approach to the

idea conveyed by the term "man." A God who is not most truly a person, can be no God at all.

But among those who believe God to be something more than a mere unconscious principle of life,—to have the attribute of conscious existence, and, as a consequence of this and of his own Divine Nature, to possess the attribute of Omniscience also,—the perfect knowledge of all things which exist, and of which he is the Author, as well as of Himself,—there is still no small confusion of idea respecting the nature of his Personality. That He must be truly a Person, all believers of Revelation, and all worshippers of a God throughout the earth, unanimously confess: but then many (those especially who regard themselves as adepts in philosophy) while they admit the Divine Being to be a Person,—a distinctly existing conscious being of a rational nature—refuse to allow to the God whom they thus profess to worship, and to regard as a Person, any sort of Divine Personal Form. They allow him indeed to be a *substance*, in the logical sense of the word; but then, for fear lest this substance should be supposed to partake of the nature of materiality, they deny it to have any form. Yet it is a most certain fact, that no substance can exist which is not at the same time a form. A substance without a form, though it may be thought of abstractedly in the mind, is, as to any actual existence, a mere non-entity, and the mind clearly perceives its distinct existence to be impossible. In short, a person without a form, is as certainly no person, as a God who is not a Person is no God. In order that God (with reverence be it spoken) may exist as a Person, and thus as a really existing God, it is absolutely necessary that he should exist in a form. Whatever is destitute of all form, is nothing.

I propose, then, in this Lecture, to inquire, what is the dictate, both of Scripture and Reason, on this important subject—*The proper Personality, and the Divine Form, of the Lord our God.*

Now the words which I have just read, with what is added in the next verse—"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him,"—while they seem more immediately to direct our attention to the high endowments which man possessed by creation, do also, by reflection, as it were, tend

to impart to us, as much perhaps as any single text in the Bible, just ideas of the nature of man's Creator. I have before applied this remark to His attributes of Love and Wisdom; and it is no less true with respect to His attribute of Personality.

Of the Divine Nature, such as it is *in itself*, it must be admitted that we cannot know anything. God is infinite, and man is finite; and between infinite and finite there exists no proportion, so as to enable the finite to approximate to a knowledge of the Infinite, *such as it is IN ITSELF*. All that we can do, is, to think of infinite attributes in a finite manner; and this we do by exalting the most perfect qualities of finite beings to their highest conceivable excellence, and then assigning them to the Divine Being, from whom they all are derived, with the acknowledgment that, in Him, their perfection is still infinitely higher. Without this help to our conceiving of the Divine Being, we could not conceive of Him at all; and in consequence of rejecting this help, many who thought themselves wiser than those who use it, have lost all idea of a God, and, at last, have altogether denied his existence. And we are justified in this mode of conceiving of the Divine Being by the authority of Scripture, which ascribes to God all the perfections which we are accustomed to think of as belonging to the excellent of the human race, and even mentions, as possessed by him, the human form, with all the parts which distinguish that form in man: thus, in the passage read as a text, it is expressly said, that man was created in the image and likeness of God: of course there is in God everything that there is in man, and this as to form also, only with infinitely greater perfection.

It is said in the first of the Articles of Religion of the Church of England, that God is a being "without body, parts, or passions:" and this notion is commonly received, in the sense which the words themselves convey, by the clergy, not only of that establishment, but of all the sections of the professing Church; and, indeed, by Deists also, and by all who think to soar above the vulgar in their ideas of the Person of God. The Articles of Religion of the Church of England were first composed and published in Latin; and it was not till about ten years afterwards that they were translated into English; but they were

then subscribed in both languages by the clergy ; whence, as Bishop Tomline observes, in his *Elements of Christian Theology*, the Latin and the English are to be esteemed as equally authentic. Yet it is remarkable that the English, though it approaches near to the Latin in the sound of the words, differs from it exceedingly in sense.

The Latin, literally translated, would say, not "God is a being without body, parts, or passions," but, "God is a being incorporeal (*incorporeus*,) indivisible (*impartibilis*,) and incapable of suffering (*impassibilis*):" and if by *incorporeal* is here intended, as may be fairly presumed, not, without body or personal form of any kind, but, *immaterial*, or without a gross material body, there could be no objection whatever to the expressions: the whole would be in perfect harmony with the truth.

It is a most certain fact that God is not corporeal, in the sense of *material*: He is an immaterial Being ; and, though not without a divine substantial personal form, yet not possessing a body of such grossness as our material bodies, or even as the spiritual bodies of the angels : but in his body, as in all things else, though having something analogous to the same in human beings,—being the Prototype of which they are the images and likenesses—He must infinitely transcend them in purity and perfection.

It is equally certain that He is "*indivisible*" and "*incapable of suffering*:" so that this part of the Articles of the Church of England, as composed in Latin, is in indisputable agreement with the truth.

But strange to say, when the founders of the Protestant Church of England translated this part of their Articles into English, they selected terms which, though similar in sound to the Latin, convey totally different ideas ; and, more melancholy still, it is from the English, and not from the Latin, that students in theology usually draw their sentiments. When the English says that God is "without body," it totally excludes the idea of his existing in any form whatever. When it affirms, that He is "without parts," it implies that He is destitute of all that is necessary to the existence of any animated form. And when it adds that he is "without passions," it implies, that as

he is without body, he is also (what indeed is an inevitable consequence) without mind. Mind cannot exist independently of a form in and by which to exercise its functions: and the passions are the affections of the mind; so that, where there are none of these, neither can there be any mind. It is said by the Apostle, that "God is love." Now love is generally called a passion: If then God is absolutely "without passions," He is without love: and it might easily be shown, that whatever existence is without love is without conscious life. And yet, strange to say, the same Articles which affirm God to be "without passions," ascribe to Him wrath and anger; which are universally allowed to be passions,—so eminently so, that when we see a person strongly under their influence we say that he is "in a passion." And, what is stranger still, these passions, ascribed to the Divine Being by those who say He is altogether "without passions," are passions of any but a heavenly nature. But, not to push this inconsistency, it is evident, that they who deny God to have either body, parts, or passions, in reality deny him to be any thing! From such a negative idea of God, the transition to the negation of God altogether is extremely easy, and is but too frequently made.

If God is considered, by those who give us these definitions of Him, to be (what He in reality is) Absolute Mind,—an Infinite Assemblage of mental affections and perceptions in their highest refinement and purity,—still it is idle to think of mind, or of affections and perceptions, without a subject, in which they can have existence. We can form an abstract idea of sight and of hearing; yet we know well that there can be neither sight nor hearing without an eye or ear as the subject of them, in which they have existence. The divine attributes are infinite love, wisdom, power, and the like. We can think of these abstractedly, if we please; yet we know well, that they can have no existence separate from a subject in which they exist. Such a subject is the Divine Person of God, whose personal form may properly be termed his body. So, again, no subject can exist without being a substance; and it is impossible to think of a substance without assigning to it some form. If then divine love cannot exist separately from a substance which is its subject, and



every substance must necessarily be in some form, what form shall we ascribe to the Divine Being but the most perfect of all forms, which is the human? Accordingly, it is true, that, with respect even to form, man was created in the image and likeness of God: and it is only by considering the image that we can rise to any just conception of the Original. So, also, whenever Jehovah manifested himself to the ancient Jews, it was always in a human form: and so, again, it was in the human form that the Lord Jesus Christ, who, as we shall see in our next Lecture, is the Personal manifestation of the Divine Being, appeared on earth; and in the same form, after his resurrection, He was seen to ascend into heaven.

There cannot then be a more certain truth than this: That the Divine Being exists in a form, and that that form is the human; so that men are men in human form, not by virtue of any thing that they possess independently in themselves, but because they were created in the image and likeness of God. Thus, also, it was not by a mere poetical license that a celebrated writer invented the phrase,—“the human face *divine*.” He only spoke from the common perception that flows from heaven into the minds of all, and leads them, when they do not think of the subject from the prejudices of human learning, to conceive of God as existing in a human form, of ineffable glory and beauty.

As, however, the belief that the Divine Being is in a human form, or in any form, is so contrary to the prejudices of many, we will go a little further into the proof of this great truth; which I conceive to be capable of being as fully established by argument, and as clearly seen by the rational faculty, as any single truth in the whole compass of theology.

Although this most consoling truth is inconsistent with the prejudices of the learned, and therefore is too inconsiderately rejected by most of them, it is, nevertheless, peculiarly grateful and acceptable to the pious and simple-minded, who have not destroyed their faculty of common perception by reasonings drawn from the fallacious appearances presented by the outward senses; we cannot then but hope, that, from among persons of this character, we shall find many favourers of the pure and holy doctrine.

Who, when he thinks of God, does not, upon the first entrance of the thought, present him to the mind's eye in a human form, —though he conceives that form, in Him, to be incomparably more perfect and glorious than in the most perfect specimens to be found of it besides, whether among men on earth or angels in heaven? This is the first idea of God which presents itself to the minds of all who have not much reasoned upon the subject from the notions of science imbibed through the senses: and even to those who have, I much question whether the same idea does not still occur whenever the thought of God enters their minds, until the idea is changed by an after-thought, drawn from the source of what they consider to be reason: which, however, is not properly *reason*, but mere reasoning, from fallacious notions grounded on an inadequate conception of the nature of some of the objects of sense. The whole mistake is owing to this—That philosophers have not generally been aware of the existence of any substance distinct from mere matter. Hence, as it is certain that God has not a grossly corporeal or material body, they have rashly concluded that He has no personal form whatever. From the same cause have originated all the mistakes which prevail respecting the human soul; with the notion entertained by many of the learned, though it seldom enters the thoughts of the simple, that the soul, though somehow capable of a separate existence (though even this is denied by many), cannot come, after death, into a state of real life, till it is re-united to its decayed body. A little illustration of this point will go far in assisting us to come to a right conclusion respecting the personal form of the Divine Being.

They who allow to the soul a state of separate existence after the death of the material body, ought, to be consistent either with reason, Scripture, or common sense, to allow it some form; since whatever is destitute of this must be an absolute nothing. It is a perception of this truth which has led many to deny to the soul any existence separate from the material body. Conscious that that which has no form or body cannot be any thing, and ignorant of the existence of any other substance than matter, they have supposed that, stripped of its material vehicle, the soul can have no existence. But admit that there may be substance

essentially distinct in its nature from matter, and then you may admit that the soul, being such a substance, may exist, and be in a human form, independently of the material body.

Matter, it is usual to argue, cannot think: But the soul thinks: Therefore the soul is not material. This is sound reasoning: but it does not follow from it that the soul, not being material, is also not substantial, or has no substance and form proper to itself. The famous proposition of Des Cartes may be a little amplified to confirm the contrary. He says, "I think: therefore I am." We only make a verbal addition really included in the proposition itself, if we say, "I think: therefore I am something." Now whatever is something—whatever has an actual existence—must either be itself a substance or exist in a substance: without all substance it would be nothing. It therefore follows, that the soul, which is what thinks in us, is, as it also is called by philosophers, a thinking substance. And as thought is demonstrably not a property of matter, it follows that there is a substance totally different from matter, and possessing properties of which matter is wholly destitute. If, also, while admitting the soul to be a thinking substance, we do not, with many who make this admission, deprive substance of all its essential attributes, we must allow it to be in a form: and what form shall we think of ascribing to the human soul but the human form itself? Thus, separated from the material body by death, the soul of man will be the man himself, the same in form as when clothed over with the material body in addition: though, by reason of the essentially different nature of the substance,—the thinking substance of which it consists, no longer capable of being perceived by the senses of men still retaining their material body.

If then the soul of man, which is the spirit that lives after death, is a spiritual substance in human form (as also is clearly evident from the numerous instances of angels and spirits recorded in the Holy Word as having been seen by men, whose spiritual senses were at the time opened for the purpose), then it may be easily admitted, also, that the Divine Being himself may likewise be a substance and in a form. The substance, moreover, of which his Divine Person consists must be infinitely

farther removed from being subject to any of the laws of matter, and, of course, from being limited by space, than the spiritual substance which composes the bodies of angels. It is only while in the world of nature and matter that even human beings are limited to space: when we depart hence, space will confine us no longer. This is evident from the sudden manner in which angels and spirits are recorded in the Scriptures to have made their appearance; which could not have been possible had they had to fly to the persons who beheld them from some remote region in space, beyond the limits of the material universe. And if spirits and angels are thus unconfined by the trammels of space and time, much more must He, by whom both space and time were created, be independent of their limitations. It is perfectly easy, and that in agreement with all true philosophy, to conceive of the Divine Being as existing in a human form, if we conceive of a substance infinitely transcending in its properties the utmost refinement of which matter is capable, and altogether free from the imperfections which from matter are inseparable. The Divine Being does really exist in such a Divine Personal Form: and thus it is literally true, that in the image of God made he man.

The fact then is, that all persons of simple unsophisticated minds, when they contemplate the Divine Being, have ideas like these respecting Him, by virtue of a common perception flowing from God himself into the minds of those who do not reject and pervert it. All such think of him as a Divine Being in a transcendently glorious Human Form. Hence, also, those of all nations who have ever attempted to give a representation of God in sculpture or painting, have always represented Him in a human form.

Persons, however, we see, who think themselves wiser than others, are apt to reject the idea which flows into the minds of all from common perception, as low and unworthy of the subject. Having thus rejected, as applicable to the Divine Being, the most noble of all forms, they have none left to assign Him; and thus they discard the idea of form altogether, and affirm that the Almighty can have no personal form whatever; which, as we have already seen, is the same thing as to deny Him to be anything. Another reason for their rejecting the idea of form is,

because they think of form solely from ideas connected with space. If God is in a form, they argue, He must be limited ; and this is incompatible with the idea of his infinity. The truth however is, that the notion entertained by many, that He is identified with boundless space, is much more limited : because, if he were really diffused through space so as to have anything in common with it, he must indeed be *in part* every where, but *wholly* no where. In thinking of Him justly, we must conceive Him to be present, indeed, in every portion of space, and yet to have nothing of space belonging to Himself ; and then we shall obtain an idea of his omnipresence, and conceive of Him as being every where present with all his divine perfections. His Omnipresence will form no obstacle to the belief of his being in a human form, if his body, like all his divine attributes, be considered as divine. Although angelic beings are not supposed to be omnipresent, yet it is readily admitted that they can in a moment be present where they please, they not being limited to a fixed portion of space, as men are. Carry this idea further, by adding the notion of infinity, and it will easily be admitted that the Divine Being may be in a human form, and yet be present every where, in every moment of time, without change of place ; He being altogether above, and independent of its limitations.

Many passages of Scripture prove the truth of the view now offered. When Jesus appeared to John, as related in Rev. i., it was not affected by his coming from some other place to the place where John was, but by opening the spiritual sight of John to behold him in the place where John was, and where the Lord equally was before John saw Him, and after, as while the manifestation continued : wherefore John does not say that the Lord *came* to him, but says of himself, "I was in the spirit : " of course, *the eyes of his spirit were open* ; and the consequence was, he saw the Lord in a Divine Human Form.

The case was the same when Jesus stood in the midst of the disciples, when they were assembled in a room with the doors shut, after his resurrection. This was not affected by his coming from one place to another, but by opening their spiritual sight ; upon which, He, as being present every where, immediately became visible.

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On another occasion, when his disappearing is related, it is not said that he went away, but that *he vanished out of their sight*; the cause of which was, because their spiritual sight, which had previously been opened, was suddenly closed, so that they no longer could see the Lord, though He was no more absent than when they did see Him. To enable men to see Him, nothing is requisite but a proper state in *them*, let them be where they may.

Let none, then, think degradingly of the Lord Jesus Christ, or suppose it impossible that He can be God Himself, from the circumstance of his returning to his heavenly glory in the body with which He rose from the tomb; or suppose that He cannot, as to the very body, be every where present. His body, when he arose, was no longer the same as to substance, as that which at first was taken from the human mother, and afterwards supported by natural nourishment: for, during his abode in the world, and finally at the resurrection, as will be shown in a subsequent Lecture, He glorified, or made Divine, his whole natural principle, putting off all that was taken from created substances, and putting on divine substance, brought forth from within, in its place; so that, at his resurrection, his very body was wholly divine, though still in human form. Having thus no longer appertaining to it any of the properties of matter, it now, though real and substantial, is entirely independent of space, and retains its human form without being subject to any of the laws of matter and motion. In his Divine Human Form, then, He is eternally present, not only in the spiritual world, above which is his more immediate residence, but in the natural world also, upholding every thing every where: whereas, could He be really absent from any created thing a single instant, that very instant such thing would drop into annihilation.

Most true then it is, even in the literal sense, that man was created in the image and likeness of God. As God is the Origin and Prototype of all that is truly human in man, so is He also of *his form*, allowed to be the most perfect that imagination can conceive. All is a transcript from a Divine Original; and were it not for the blemishes that sin has introduced, man would still reflect, as in a mirror, the image of his Maker. It is true that, even in his highest state of perfection, man, as a finite being,

was but an imperfect copy; yet the imperfection of the resemblance could not prevent it from being really a copy, and as exact a one as the unavoidable inadequacy of created materials would admit.

As, however, I have chiefly enforced the fact of man's being an image of his Maker as to form, and thus endeavoured to prove that the Lord is a man in form, from the examples afforded by the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born a man in the world, it may be objected, that, nevertheless, Jehovah from eternity might not have been in that form. To this I would reply,—Man is called an image and likeness of God before the Lord became Incarnate; proving, that the Lord did not first assume the human form at the incarnation, but had existed in it from eternity. Besides, Jehovah is continually spoken of, throughout the Old Testament, as having all the members of the human form; and though what is thus said refers to spiritual things as well as natural, every member of the human form being a corresponding emblem of some spiritual and divine perfection,—as the eye of the understanding, the nostrils of perception, &c.,—still, since, as we have before seen, sight cannot exist without an eye, nor smell without nostrils, so neither can mental qualities, such as understanding and perception, exist without an organized form in which to dwell as their subject. Deprive them of a suitable form, and you reduce them to nothing. And the proper form of Love and Wisdom, which are the first Essentials of the Divine Nature, is the human,—both in their Origin—God, and their recipient subject—man.

The fact then is, that before the incarnation, God was a Divine Man in first principles, answering to the state in which angels exist in their world, who also are men in human form, but without the outer covering of the natural body; whereas, after the incarnation, God became a Man in last principles also, answering to the state of a man in the world. But in neither state was he a mere spiritual or a mere natural man; but in both a Divine Substantial Man.

Other arguments tending to confirm this great truth, that man was created in the image and likeness of God as to his body as well as in respect to his mind, might easily be offered. I will only mention one.

A very powerful evidence of the truth is afforded in the strong tendency to the human form observable among all the subjects of the animal kingdom, and even, though more remotely, among all the subjects of the vegetable kingdom also. Those animals which differ most in their external shape from man, have nevertheless most of the organs which are found in the human body; especially all those which are most essential to life; though all existing with endless varieties. All have heads, bodies, feet; and in their heads, eyes, noses, mouths, ears; and in their bodies, hearts, lungs, and the other viscera. As the animal descends in the scale of existence, the resemblance becomes more imperfect: yet the principal organs are retained through most of the genera and species; and where these cease, their places are supplied by something analogous, which performs their office in a manner suited to the animal's nature. Vegetables, also, circulate sap, through vessels answering to arteries and veins, from their root, which answers to the heart; and they inhale and respire air, through pores in their leaves, which perform for them the office of lungs.

In short, it may be said, that all the lower objects of the creation, do, in a certain image, represent man: an analogy which could never have existed, did not man himself, in a certain image, represent the Lord. Thus, through man, all the objects in the universe of creation point to the Lord as a Divine Man. If the Creator himself were not in human form, this tendency to that form observable in all his works would be most unaccountable. In the lower created beings, the tendency to this form exists, but not the form itself. In man, the form itself is displayed: the reason is, because "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."

Enough may now have been advanced from our text, considered in its most obvious and literal sense, as pointing out the origin of the human form in man. The ideas which are thus presented to us of the Divine Being, are certainly such as, if affectionately embraced, are adapted to be of the greatest advantage to us, in our intercourse with Him. Whilst we regard him as an indefinable somewhat, diffused without form through the immensity of space, the mind is utterly lost and distracted when it wishes



to approach Him : it knows not where to seek Him : and it inwardly feels, whatever it may outwardly profess, that such a God is a shadowy nothing. But when we regard Him as the aggregate of all perfection concentrated in a Divine Human Form, we, present to our mental sight an Object on which the eye of faith can rest with assurance and delight. We have a really existing Object of worship,—a God capable of being approached and adored : and we exchange towards Him the sentiment of ignorant wonder for that of rational admiration and devotion. When also we view this Divine Person as being wholly present every where, being subject to no limitations of space or distance, we lose the sense of remoteness which must ever attend the idea of an impersonal God. We feel assured that he is indeed ever near to us, and that, whenever we seek Him in sincerity, He is at hand to assist us.

Let us, then, brethren, avail ourselves of the advantages which *this idea of our God* so certainly carries with it. Let us turn to Him with our whole heart ; and he will repair the ravages which *the entrance of sin into the world* has made in our nature : and, as we still retain some traces in our outward form of our Divine Original, He will likewise spiritually create us anew in the image and likeness of God.

## LECTURE VII.

THAT THE DIVINE NAME, JESUS CHRIST, IS THE NAME OF JEHOVAH IN HIS HUMANITY: AND THAT THIS IS THE ONE GOD, IN WHOSE DIVINE PERSON THE WHOLE TRINITY CENTRES.

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REV. i. 17, 18.

*"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."*

IN addressing you this evening, my friends and brethren, upon one of the most important of the doctrines which we believe to be those of the True Christian Religion,—yea, of the Christian Religion as it was, according to prophecy, to be restored to its purity, under a dispensation of it prefigured under the symbol of the New Jerusalem, I again have to solicit your most candid and serious attention. The views which we are the humble instruments of offering to the public on the most momentous of subjects, are, I acknowledge, almost entirely new to the religious world: but is it not time, we would ask, when all other sciences are abounding with new discoveries, which have totally changed their aspect from that which they wore but a few years ago, that something should arise in religion, which should enable it to keep pace with the advancing intelligence of the age, and prevent it from being left behind, as to the doctrinal part of it, as presenting no satisfaction to the well-informed mind,—as exhibiting only views of truth suited to the darkness of what are emphatically called the dark ages, originating, in great part, in the dreary period of Roman Catholic domination, and only a little altered, without being much improved, by the leaders of

the Reformation,—men whose minds had themselves been formed under the influence of the darkness which they in part attempted to dispel? Infidelity, either total or partial, is in the present day making rapid progress : surely then it is time that Christianity should be presented in a form less capable of receiving injury from its attacks. The great strong hold of infidelity is the prevailing doctrine of the Trinity : surely then it is time that this important doctrine should assume a less mysterious aspect, and be presented in a form which shall not obviously contradict the perceptions of reason. It is the common doctrine of the Trinity which has occasioned the great increase of Unitarianism. Conscious that the persuasion of three Divine Persons constituting but one God could not withstand the scrutiny of reason, numbers have fled as a refuge to Unitarianism. But here they find themselves far from being secure : for Deists regard their surrender of the Divinity of Jesus Christ as a homage to the superior rationality of the doctrines of mere Deism ; and they consider that, to be consistent, they must come over quite, by abandoning all regard for the Scriptures, since the Scriptures do most unquestionably, as even Deists can discern, ascribe Divinity to the Lord Jesus Christ. The celebrated Dr. Priestley addressed a publication to the Jews, telling them that, as he and those who thought with him had abandoned the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, regarding him only as a mere man, there was nothing to prevent the Jews from becoming Christians upon the Unitarian principle : to which his Jewish answerer replied, that it was impossible for the Jews ever to become Unitarians, since, if they were to receive the New Testament at all, they must acknowledge the doctrine which it so plainly inculcates of the Divinity of Jesus Christ ; and he expressed great surprise that Dr. Priestley could deny this doctrine, while he professed to acknowledge the authority of the New Testament. Most certainly, no doctrine professing to be grounded on the Scripture of the Old and New Testament, will ever satisfy impartial persons, which does not acknowledge the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and no doctrine will ever satisfy men of reason, which only admits the acknowledgment of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, by splitting asunder

the indivisible unity of the Divine Essence, and apportioning it among three separate persons, of whom He is one. It is because our doctrines at once avoid both this Scylla and this Charybdis, that we regard them as the only ones which raise an impregnable barrier against the devastations of infidelity, and that we invite to them the unprejudiced attention of all to whom either reason or religion are objects of regard.

In my Lecture of the last Lord's day evening but one, I endeavoured to establish the fact, of the absolute Oneness, both in Essence and Person, of the Divine Object of worship, and to show that the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity is in the most perfect agreement with such Absolute Unity. That this is the dictate of reason, it was easy enough to demonstrate; for every person possessed of reason must see in a moment, that the universe could neither have been created, nor sustained, such as we behold it, one uniform whole, unless it owed both its creation and its preservation to one Creator and Governor. What would become of this earth, and of the other planets, if they did not look to one sun as their centre, by whose heat and light they are kept in a state capable of bringing forth and perfecting their vegetable and animal offspring,—whose attraction they feel, keeping them in their regular courses, and around which they perpetually revolve? What the sun is to the earth and its productions, God is to the soul; and in vain could it be imagined that human minds could exist, except they were called into being by one Source of Good. The sun, also, is the most obvious symbol in nature of its Divine Original: and as there is one sun to a system of earths, so must there be one Creator of the sun and earths together. It is true that the visible universe presents to our contemplation innumerable suns, each of which, it cannot be doubted, has its system of earths: but it is obvious that all the suns together, which we call stars, innumerable as they are, form but one great system of the universe: and thus they all point to one God as their Creator, of whom each is the material representative to its dependent system of earths, and from whose unity it is that they are all combined into one grand whole. It is impossible therefore to open our eyes to the universe of nature, if we open at the same time the eyes

of our minds, without hearing the whole, and every part, continually proclaiming the Absolute Unity, both in Essence and Person, of the Divine Object of worship.

What is thus so clearly testified by reason, is, we have seen, in the most decided terms, declared by Scripture; which, while it gives, in the name of Jehovah, as its first commandment, the precept, "Thou shall have no other gods before me," reiterates throughout, in every variety of form, the continually sounding declaration of Jehovah, "I am God, and there is none else."

Nevertheless, it is a fact, that the Scriptures do reveal a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But from the premises it follows, that the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity cannot be repugnant to its obvious doctrine of the absolute Unity; and hence we have seen that the Scripture Trinity cannot be a Trinity of persons, as the word person has been defined by the prevailing school of theologians, as being an individual substance of a rational nature; though this, we noticed, was not the meaning of the term "person," when first it was introduced into the language of theology. Man, however, we have observed, is expressly declared to have been created in the image and likeness of God; a declaration which assures us, that whatever is the nature of the Trinity existing in God, there is an image of it in man. If the Divine Being has three persons, man must have three persons; if man has not three persons, so neither, we may assume as certain, has God, since He created man after his own image. Man, however, we have seen, is truly a threefold being. He has a soul, he has a body, and he exercises, from both in union, an influence and operation on persons and things around him: and this, we have shown, must be an image and copy of the Trinity in the Lord. Thus the Father is the inmost Divine Essence answering to the soul in man; the Son is the divine form or person manifesting the existence of the divine Essence; and the Holy Spirit is the outflowing life, the proceeding operation, acting upon rational and created subjects.

These important points having been established in our last Lecture but one, we last Lord's day evening, endeavoured to show, that this Triune God possesses most strictly the attribute of Personality, and exists in a Divine Human Form; in which

respect, also, the words of inspiration speak the plain truth when they declare, that man was created in the image and likeness of God. Upon the present occasion, we will come more closely to the consideration of the question, Who is God?—The answer to which, indeed, we before have indicated, but have not proceeded regularly to prove. This is to be the object of our present Lecture; in which we will endeavour to show, *That the Divine Name, Jesus Christ, is the name of Jehovah in his Humanity; and that this is the One God, in whose Divine Person the whole Trinity centres.*

This is a question of the greatest importance that all theology can furnish;—to know, since there is but One God, who that God is. As the Lord himself said to the Jews, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" And when they answered, "The Son of David," he rejoins, "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? The Jews could not answer the question, because they had no conception that he who was called, from the mode of his appearing in the world, the Son of David, and of whom they had no other idea than as of a great temporal prince, was, nevertheless, a being to whom David owed allegiance as his Lord; was, in fact, a being who possessed the prerogatives of Divinity: yet this, Jesus, the true Son of David, plainly intimated by his significant questions. If then Jesus, the divinely predicted Son of David, is Lord, or a Divine Being, and there cannot be two Lords or Divine Beings, what can He be but the one Lord clothed with Humanity, for the purpose of communicating Himself in an accommodated and receptive manner to mankind?

There are many serious investigations connected with this momentous subject: wherefore we mean to carry it on in two or three following Lectures. At present we will confine ourselves to the investigation, chiefly, of that part of the Scripture evidence respecting it, which is contained in the chapter of our text. Difficulties and objections, I know, will arise in the minds of some: but I entreat them not to allow these to withdraw their attention from the positive evidence that may be offered. All

the chief objections that can be raised will be noticed and answered, if not in the present, in subsequent Lectures.

A glorious being, whom John knew to be the Lord Jesus Christ, reveals himself to this beloved disciple. "And when I saw him," says he to whom the revelation was made, "I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the First and the Last: (I am) he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." How magnificent are these declarations! And they contain lessons of the deepest and most momentous wisdom, capable of opening the eyes of the blind, and unstopping the ears of the deaf. Nothing can be of more importance to man, than to know to whom he must go that he may have eternal life,—to whom he must apply that he may escape eternal death: and this knowledge is most plainly communicated in the words before us. They are spoken, we see, by Jesus Christ: He it is that saith, "I am the First and the Last." These expressions alone convey to the mind, in the most powerful manner, the idea of sole, supreme, and exclusive Divinity, in Him who utters them. Can any thing be before the First, or beyond the Last? Impossible! He then who is entitled to declare this of Himself, must be the All in all—the Origin and Sustainer of all things. It is in vain to reason, as some do, that the word *God* is applicable to other beings beside the Supreme God, and that therefore, when applied, as it unquestionably is applied, to Jesus Christ, it does not prove Him to be the Supreme God:—it is in vain, I say, to urge this as an argument, even were it as true as it is otherwise, whilst He assumes, besides, a title so full of Infinity, so absolutely exclusive, as this: "I am the First and the Last."

If then we confine our attention to the mere force of these divine words alone; and were they used in no other passage but this throughout the Scriptures; the inference would be unavoidable, that He who utters them is the Supreme and Only God. But they occur again in the second chapter of this book; where the same Divine Speaker says to the Church of Smyrna, "I am the First and the Last;"—and again in the last chapter, where the same speaker says, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the

Beginning and the End, the First and the Last ;"—and also, a few verses before in this first chapter, where the Divine Author of this prophecy, before he had discovered Himself to the spiritual eye of John, had been heard by him saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty ;"—and once more, a verse or two further, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last." But this is not all : these incommunicable names of Deity, thus frequently assumed by the Lord Jesus Christ, are repeatedly used by Jehovah in the most solemn manner, in the Old Testament, to describe *his* majesty, and sole Divinity, as the Great Author of all. "Who hath wrought," saith he, by Isaiah [ch. xli. 4,] "calling the generations from the beginning? I, Jehovah" (for so it is in the original) "the First, and with the Last ; I am He." So again, still speaking in his character of Creator, He says, in chap. xlviii. 12, 13, "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called : I am He : I am the First, I also am the Last : My hand also hath laid the foundations of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens." And again, in his character of Redeemer, and as the Only God, he thus speaks in ch. xlv. 6 : "Thus saith Jehovah, the king of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts : I am the First, and I am the Last ; and beside me there is no God." Who then can He be that says in our text, "I am the First and the Last," but he who takes the same title in Isaiah, and there declares that he is the Creator, and the Redeemer, and that beside Him there is no God ?

Who this most glorious Being *personally* is, is not only declared by John on first beholding him, when he says that he saw one like unto the Son of Man, which is one of the known titles of Jesus Christ ; and repeatedly in the long discourse which follows ; but in the words which immediately succeed, where the Divine Speaker says, "I am He that liveth, and was dead." In the literal sense, these words obviously refer to the repeated declaration of Jesus Christ when on earth, that he was "*the Life* ;" and to the circumstance of his then suffering crucifixion from the Jews. It is added, however, "and, behold, I am alive for evermore ;"—which words, in the original, are the same as are



used to describe the Supreme Being who was seen, in chap. iv., sitting on the throne, only they are there translated, "He that liveth for ever and ever;" of whom it is said, that the twenty-four elders fall down before Him that sitteth on the throne, and worship Him that "liveth for ever and ever." If uniformity in the translation had been regarded, these words in our text would have been rendered, "And, behold, I am He that liveth for ever and ever;" which is another plain description of the Supreme and Only God who is from everlasting to everlasting.

But there is a spiritual sense likewise in all the sayings of Holy Writ; as must obviously be the case in all declarations proceeding from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ: and it will add to our just apprehension of the subject before us to notice that sense here. The Lord is dead in regard to man, when He is not acknowledged, or not acknowledged in his true character; and it was in consequence of their not acknowledging Him that the Jews actually crucified Him. As He is here speaking as the Son of man—for John says that he saw One like unto the Son of man—and at the same time declares that he is the First and the Last,—by his saying that he was dead is spiritually meant, that he was not acknowledged to be Divine as to his Human Nature. The whole book of the Revelation of John, in its true spiritual sense, refers to the discoveries that would be made of the state of mankind, and of the professing church, immediately before the second coming of the Lord; wherefore the declaration is put in the past tense,—"*I was dead*," in reference to the denial of the Divinity of his Humanity, and thus of his being the Supreme and Only God, which would, previous to that period, have prevailed in the Church: for when he comes in spirit and not in person, there is no other possible means of putting him to death, but by denying or rejecting him. Therefore, when the words, "and, behold, I am He that liveth for ever and ever," follow the statement that He was dead, their meaning is, not only that the Speaker, in and of Himself, liveth for ever and ever, but, to answer to the statement that He was dead, or had been denied, that this denial would cease,—that He would at length be acknowledged in his true character, as being, since his ascension, divine even as to his Humanity;—that a state of the church

would arrive, in which he would live, as the true God in a Divine Humanity, in the hearts of a grateful people. Blessed encouragement this, for us, in our humble efforts to extend the knowledge of Him in the glory which of right is his due! And allow me here to say, my brethren, that happy will it be for us, if we are found in the number of those in whose hearts He thus lives. The Lord is dead with respect to man, when he is not sincerely acknowledged by him; and sincere acknowledgment must be such as affects the life, as well as moves the lips. How loudly soever we may profess his name, He does not live in us, till the proceeding emanation of his divine life, which is his Holy Spirit, or his love and wisdom communicated to us, forms the life of our hearts and souls; or till the governing principles which affect our wills and enlighten our understandings are all such as originate with Him.

But to finish our remarks upon the evidence which the titles He here assumes yield to his true character. He says, finally, "And I have the keys of hell and of death." This, again, is a prerogative which can only belong, if deeply considered, to the Supreme and Only God. Who else can either open hell, and constrain death, or the opposite of spiritual life, to relinquish his prey, and so liberate the man who as to his spirit, is in the death of sin, and constrain hell, and the infernal powers by and among whom he is bound, to let go their hold;—who can do this, but He who is Omnipotent? Accordingly, just as in the case of the divine title of "the First and the Last," *this* attribute or prerogative is, in the most solemn manner, ascribed in the Old Testament to Jehovah alone—to that Jehovah, who so impressively declares that He is One. Thus David says, (Ps. lxxviii. 20), "He that is our God, is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." Here it is to be observed that the word "God" is printed in capital letters, to denote that in the original it is "Jehovah;" for as the translators of the common Bible generally use the word "Lord," printed in capital letters, instead of the word "Jehovah;" so, when the name "Jehovah" is joined in the original with a word which properly signifies "Lord," they exchange it for "God," printed in capital letters. Of this many examples may be seen

in the prophet Ezekiel, where the title "Lord God" very frequently occurs, and the word "God" is printed in capital letters: in the original it is "the Lord Jehovah." So this passage of David properly says, "Unto Jehovah the Lord belong the issues from death." The meaning, it is evident, is precisely the same as that of our text,—“I have the keys of hell and of death.” According to David, this divine power belongs to none but “the God of *salvation*,” “the Lord Jehovah:” Jesus, the *Saviour*, claims it for himself: Jesus, the Saviour, is then “the God of salvation,” “the Lord Jehovah.”

Nothing surely can be more clear and conclusive than the evidence afforded, by the whole of this declaration of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the supreme and Sole Divinity of Him who claims such magnificent titles and prerogatives. Perhaps, however, a difficulty will present itself to the minds of some, arising from the manner in which Jesus Christ is mentioned in the first verse of this chapter and book, where a distinction is made between him and God, and the communications for the church contained in this book are said to be given him by God. This, then, shall be considered.

The book begins with these words: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to declare unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.” It may be asked, If God gives unto Jesus Christ the things which he communicates to his servants, how can he be the Supreme God himself? An explanation of this passage will apply to all similar forms of speaking throughout the New Testament: and it admits of an explanation, which I should apprehend, must entirely satisfy every serious and considerate mind.

We have already seen, that, in some of the succeeding verses, closing with that of our text, Jesus calls himself “the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty,” and “the First and the Last.” This fully evinces that the term “Jesus Christ,” and “God,” used in the first verse, cannot be meant to indicate two separate Beings: otherwise there must be two Alphas and Omegas, two Almighties, two Firsts and Lasts: which were impossible, and absurd. But the name “Jesus Christ” is that

which the Lord assumed when he appeared in a body of flesh on this earth ; wherefore by that name is meant the Eternal God with respect to that principle in his nature by and from which He communicates blessings to men on earth—to human beings in a *natural* state of existence ;—thus it denotes what may be called his Divine Natural Principle,—or his Glorified Human Nature. So by the term “ God ” is meant the same Divine Being with respect to his Essential Divine Nature. Now as the Human Nature of the Godhead, if it were *merely* human, and not at the same time Divine, could not communicate divine blessings to man, therefore the power of doing so is said to be communicated to it by God ; by which is meant, that the efficacy of the Divine Humanity in enlightening man, is owing to its being the seat, and manifested form, of the whole Divine Essence.

This may be best illustrated by the exactly parallel case of the soul and body of man. The body of man is the instrument by which he holds converse with others, and by which he performs all his functions in the world ; nor could his soul, without it, make itself at all perceptible to, or operate upon, other men in a natural state of existence : yet the body derives all its functions entirely from the soul, separate from which it would be incapable of conversing with and operating upon others, and even of existing at all ; wherefore it may most truly be said, that these powers are given it by the soul. Apply this parallel to the case of the Divinity and Humanity of the Lord ; and you will obtain a view that will remove all obscurity. The Essential Divinity, here called God, separate from the Divine Humanity, called Jesus Christ, could no more operate savingly upon man in his degenerate and natural state, than the soul without the body could produce operations in the world : and, again, the Humanity, separate from the Essential Divinity, would be as destitute of power, as the body of a man separate from his soul. But, in union, they are omnipotent. And so perfect is their union, that it would be as incorrect to regard God and Jesus Christ as two persons, as to regard as two persons a man's soul and his body.

That, also, the Lord's Human Nature, since his resurrection, is not such as that of *mere* humanity, or like what belongs to

mortal men, but is, like his Infinite Essence, actually Divine, may be seen from the same illustration. For man's soul and body are both *human*; and it would be impossible for his soul to produce human actions if it were inclosed in the body of an inferior animal; and still more so, were it inclosed in the trunk of a tree, or in a lump of unorganized matter. So must the Lord's Essence and Humanity be both Divine; and it would be impossible for his Divinity to perform in man the works necessary for his regeneration, or to possess, in that Humanity, as is expressly declared, "all power in heaven and in earth" [Matt. xxviii. 18,] if his Humanity were only like that of an ordinary man. Such a Humanity would be as inadequate an organ for the operations of his Divinity, as a pebble or grain of sand would be for those of a human soul. Hence we see how certain it is, that the Lord Jesus Christ must possess the attributes of Divinity, even as to his Human Nature.

Many Christians have felt, that unless the Saviour were an Almighty One, He could not afford the succour which they need: and how could He be Almighty, if not wholly Divine,—thus, Divine even as to his Human Nature? Unless it were so, none could experience the influences of the Holy Spirit; which proceeds from his Humanity. Hence it is said in John, [ch. vii. 31,] that "the Holy Spirit was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." "The Holy Spirit" here means the divine operations upon the souls of men proceeding from the Glorified or Divine Humanity of the Lord: but as his Humanity was not fully divine so long as it appeared in a tangible form on earth, but became so by a process which He then underwent, therefore, until this was completed, and its entire union with the Divine Essence accomplished, the Holy Spirit did not proceed from Him. When, however, this great work was finished, which was when He rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven,—his Humanity having become the adequate form, and instrument for the operations, of the Divine Essence, as man's body is of his soul,—the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was abundantly fulfilled;—that is, divine influences proceeded from his Humanity, enlightening the minds of all who turned towards Him, and imparting in profusion the endowments of salvation. But this

part of the subject will be more fully illustrated in subsequent lectures.

From what has been advanced, I trust I may say, it may be clearly seen, what are the distinctions in the Divine Nature intended by the terms "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit:" and also, how it may be true, that the operations of Jesus Christ, by his Spirit, are wrought from the Father, and how the revelations made by Him to his church are given Him from the Father, without there being between them any distinction of persons. Jesus Christ is the proper name of the Divine Humanity, which is the personal form of the Divine Essence; and the Holy Spirit is the proceeding life and energy, which Jesus, as he promised in John, [ch. xv. 26,] sends from the Father; or, which emanates from the Divine Humanity in union with the Essential Divinity. Thus also we see that Jesus Christ, viewed not as separate from, but as One with, the Father, is the proper Object of all rightly directed worship. Clearly, indeed, does the whole Word of God, when attentively considered, bear testimony to this great truth! If it has hitherto lain concealed, and is at present too generally overlooked, it is only because the minds of men are too little prepared to undertake the duties which the acknowledgment of it involves. But to those who wish to know the true God, in order that they may love and obey Him, He is ever disposed to reveal Himself, and is ready to burst in majesty upon their intellectual eye from every page of his Word.

I will conclude with a few remarks that may tend to remove objections which may arise from an imperfect apprehension of the subject.

A reason why some persons find a difficulty of conceiving that Jesus Christ is not a separate person from the Father, is, because they have defective views of the nature of the divine omnipresence, and imagine, that if Jehovah dwelt in Jesus when on earth as the soul of man in its body, he must have been restricted as to space, and that the throne of heaven must in the mean time have been left without an occupant. But it is a truth on which our doctrines, in agreement with all Scripture and with all right reason, constantly insist, that God is eternally present everywhere, without being in the least controlled or limited by

space; for no shackles of space can by any possibility limit or confine Him who is Infinite. It is also to be borne in mind, that the body of the Lord Jesus Christ while on earth, being born of a human mother, must at first have partaken of her nature: of course, that body could not be a receptacle and dwelling-place for the Essential Divinity in all its fulness, till renewed by a divine process; and perfectly assimilated to the Divine Nature. That this was only done *gradually*, is evident from the circumstance of the Lord's being thirty years old before he commenced the public work of his ministry; the reason of which delay was, because his human nature was not previously so far advanced to Oneness with the Divinity, as to be capable of receiving it in the fulness requisite for the performance of the divine works which afterwards showed forth themselves in Him. Indeed, his human nature was not altogether united to his Divine Essence till after his resurrection; as is evident from his being previously in a material body, not outwardly distinguishable from that of an ordinary man; whereas, after his resurrection, we find that his body itself, being then also divine, was no longer visible to the Jews, and only to the disciples by a special manifestation. Thus then the Human Nature was not assumed by Jehovah, by quitting his throne in heaven and shutting himself up in a material frame; for this would be impossible, as being contrary to all the divine attributes. It was effected, therefore, by the Infinite God's putting forth his influences as a proceeding sphere, and these concentrating themselves in a form taken from a human parent; which is what is meant by its being said to Mary [Luke i. 35], "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee:"—the Holy Ghost or Spirit, and the Power of the Highest or the Most High, are the divine life and energy proceeding from Jehovah God;—He, while thus producing a form to be animated by Himself, still remaining in the centre of all things, and by his Spirit everywhere present, as before. Any one can conceive it possible for a man to be so filled with the Holy Spirit as to be entirely possessed by it: as was sometimes the case with the old prophets. Imagine then a human form to be produced by such an emanation of the Divine Life operating on

the virgin, and afterwards to be continually filled and actuated by the same, the divine power operating in it with such energy, as at last completely to assimilate it to its own nature :—Only, I say, form this idea of the subject, and you will have, I apprehend, some faint but not untrue conception of the mode of the birth of Jesus Christ, and of the means by which he advanced to perfect oneness with the Divine Essence. Upon this view we see how the saying of the Apostle Paul [Col. ii. 9] must be true—that “in him (that is, in Jesus Christ,) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” But the Godhead, we know, cannot be divided : whatever then receives the Godhead in *all its fulness* must form One Person with it, as the body with the soul.

This divine subject will be further illustrated in future Lectures ; but from what has now been offered may in some measure be seen, how it is true that the Eternal Jehovah and Jesus Christ are One Divine Being in one Divine Person,—that, in fact, the Divine Name, Jesus Christ, is the name of Jehovah in his humanity; and that this is the One God, in whose Divine Person the whole Trinity centres.

“To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever !”



## LECTURE VIII.

### THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE DIVINE NATURE OF HIS RESURRECTION-BODY.

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LUKE xxiv. latter part of ver. 5, and beginning of ver. 6.

*"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."*

(Preached on Easter Day.)

IN our last Lecture it was endeavoured to illustrate the doctrine, which we regard as one of the most important articles of the True Christian Religion, That the Divine Name, Jesus Christ, is the name of Jehovah in his Humanity, in whose Divine Person, therefore, the whole Divine Trinity centres. We then endeavoured, though briefly, and without fully entering into this part of the subject, to obviate the objection which is formed against this important doctrine, while it is supposed that we mean to affirm, that the Infinite Jehovah actually shut himself up in a body of finite materials in the world, thus confined himself to a little spot in the land of Judea, abdicated, for a while, the throne of heaven, and left the universe without its Governor;—ideas which are utterly absurd—absolutely monstrous—in themselves, and which would indeed render our doctrine both irrational and unscriptural, if, as some of our adversaries have most mistakenly imagined, they involved anything of the kind. On the contrary, we have shown, that so far as the Humanity of the Lord, while in the world, partook in any degree of human imperfection, it was not the proper personal manifestation of Jehovah; but that it became such by a wonderful process of glorification, which was completed at the resurrection and ascension. This being the day on which the former of these great events is commemorated, I propose, in this Lecture, to treat of

a subject which will very much illustrate many things which have been advanced before, and many that will be offered in our subsequent Lectures: That subject is, *The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Divine Nature of his Resurrection-Body.*

The great event of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ has always been regarded as the main thing on which depends the Christian's hope. If Christ be not risen from the dead, as the apostle observes, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain. For his remaining in the tomb would have proved him to have been but a man, however holy and gifted, and of course incapable of imparting any help to his fellow-men, to lead them to heaven, beyond what might be gathered from his example and instructions: and these would not have differed, except in their greater excellence, from the example and instructions of other pious men; which, although they may point out the way to heaven, convey no inward power to enable the sinner to enter and walk in it. Such a power could not possibly be imparted by the precepts and example of Jesus, had He been merely a holy mortal man, and had He shared the common lot of mortal men, by continuing to sleep, as to his natural part, in the silent tomb,—had he not risen to full union with Divinity, and thus received, as to his Human Essence, the power of abiding perpetually with his disciples,—“Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,”—and of communicating to them the inward endowments necessary to empower them to obey his precepts, to follow his example, and thus to become like-minded with Him.

It is true, indeed, that Jesus Christ is not the only being that ever returned from the grave. Merely mortal men have, likewise, risen from the dead; as Lazurus, the widow's son of Nain, and several others; whose spirits were arrested in their transit to the other world, and bidden again to animate their defunct material tenements, by the powerful word of Jesus. But between their resurrection and His, there are these remarkable points of difference. In the first place, they were raised by His power, not their own; whereas he assured his hearers that he would rise again by his own power:—“I have power,” says he, “to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again” (which

words clearly show, that when Peter says, in his sermon to the Jews, "This Jesus hath God raised up," we are to understand, not a God separate from Jesus, but the Divine Essence within Him; according to which idea it is equally correct to say, that God raised Him, and that He raised Himself.) In the second place, all other persons who had been recalled to life, not only rose again, but also died again,—otherwise they would be living among men at the present day; whereas, in the words of the Apostle, "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him." And, finally,—what perhaps is the most singular distinction of all,—they, after they had been restored to life, continued, so long as they retained such merely temporary life, to live upon *the earth*, as before; as it is said of the widow's son, that Jesus delivered him to his mother; and of Lazarus, that he was present with his sisters and many Jews at a feast; thus continuing on earth as before, and being equally discernible to the eyes of all, seen alike by his friends and his enemies, so that the Jews, it is said, sought to put him again to death because that through him many believed on Jesus: whereas Jesus, after his resurrection, was entirely invisible to the Jews, and was only seen even by the disciples when he manifested himself to them in a miraculous manner, such as appearing suddenly in the midst of them when the doors were shut.

Now the reason of these wonderful peculiarities attending the resurrection of Jesus is simply this: because the Apostle Paul speaks the plain truth of Him when he declares, that He was "God manifest in the flesh,"—because He was the Eternal Jehovah clothed in human nature. And the reason why in his resurrection is centred the whole foundation of the Christian's hope, is, because his resurrection, with all the wonders attending it, demonstrated, that his Human Nature was then so perfectly assimilated to his Divine, as to be itself Divine also; and it is only from his Human Nature thus glorified or rendered a full participator in Divinity, that those saving influences can flow which must lead back erring man to conjunction with his God. It is therein that the Divinity Itself is rendered approachable and conceivable by man. Without it, God must ever have re-

mained, to man, an unfathomable, inconceivable abyss, no more apprehensible by the eye of his mind, than boundless extension is by the eye of his body.

I propose in this Lecture to endeavour to establish these facts: *That the chief difficulty attending the belief on Jesus Christ as the Only God, would be removed, if the proper distinction were made between what He possessed as the Son of Mary and as the Son of God: and also, if it were seen that, while He was in the world, his Human Nature successively underwent a change; so that, while the Son of Mary died at the crucifixion, and was wholly and forever put away by his burial, the Humanity which rose was purely the Son of God, without any mixture of merely human infirmity: and that the Son of God cannot be a being separate from God himself, but is the proper title of the Divine Humanity, derived from the Essential Divinity, and constituting One Person with it, as the body of man is derived from, and constitutes one person with, his soul.* These being important and certain truths, to regard Jesus as being still the Son of Mary, is to seek the living among the dead.

I must be permitted to assume as true, what in former Lectures I have endeavoured to show, and which in some future ones will yet be more fully proved,—That Paul did not speak in the language of hyperbole, but in that of truth and soberness, when he declared, respecting the Lord Jesus Christ, that “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”—not *part* of the Godhead, but *all*; and that Jesus Himself, who affirms that He is the Truth Itself, did not utter a sentiment adverse to the truth, but that He spoke the plain truth in plain words, when he said to Philip, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” And if only these two statements are admitted to be true, He is, as to his Essence, the Father Himself, and God alone.

The chief difficulty with which this subject has been attended in the minds of those who have considered it, has arisen, as already intimated, from their not having adverted to the wonderful change which took place in the person itself of Jesus during the period of his abode on earth: and yet, that his person did undergo such a change, is most plainly indicated in Scripture. Because he was born with all that part of mere humanity which

ordinary men receive from their human mothers, although, unlike any ordinary man, he had no human father—no father but the Divine Father;—overlooking this infinite difference between him and common human beings, it has in general been supposed, that he was, as to his human nature, a mere man, a positive creature, much as ordinary men are, both while he abode on earth and when he ascended into heaven: whereas had it been adverted to—what the Scriptures plainly teach,—that he underwent a process similar to, though infinitely more exalted in degree than, that which in man is called regeneration and sanctification, which consists in a real renewal of the external man, and by which the external man of the Lord Jesus Christ, or what he possessed as the Son of Mary, was gradually put off, till, at his resurrection, none of it was remaining—so that he then, and now, no longer was, or is, the Son of Mary in any sense whatever,—subsequently existing, not in a material, but in what the Apostle calls a *glorious*, which is in reality a *Divine* body; and had it also been observed, that all that is said of his sufferings, or of his state of humiliation while on earth, relates to states which belonged to him as the Son of Mary, and only so long as he continued her Son:—Had, I say, these truths been considered, it would have been seen, that no valid argument can be drawn, from the circumstances attendant on the state of humiliation of the Lord Jesus Christ, against his Divinity, and even his Sole Divinity, in the Glorified Body which now constitutes his Divine Personal Form, and which is not material, but Divine Substantial, being in fact, nothing else than pure Divine Love displayed in a human form. Thus, also, had these things been attended to by the framers of doctrinal systems, we should have been instructed to concentrate our faith on one Divine Person alone; whose Essence, or inmost principle of life, answering to the soul of man, is what, in the style of representatives composed of natural images in which the Scriptures are written, is called the Father; whose Divine Form or Body is what is called the Son; and whose Divine Proceeding or Operative Energy is what is called the Holy Ghost.

But as this subject,—respecting the difference between the human nature which the Lord Jesus Christ took from the human

mother and that which he derived from the Divine Father,—or, in other words, between what is called the Son of Mary and what is called the Son of God,—is of the utmost consequence to be distinctly apprehended, we will dwell upon it a little more particularly.

According to what has already been offered, it may be seen, that the body of material flesh and blood, in which the Lord Jesus Christ, while on earth, was visible to all beholders, is by no means to be considered as strictly One with the Divine Essence, and its proper personal form. This body was taken from the virgin, and was composed of the same materials as the bodies of ordinary men, and supported in like manner by natural nourishment. With respect to this body, then, and all the natural appetites and affections connected with it, Jesus was, while in the world, the Son of Mary. It is to be understood, therefore, that when we affirm the Lord Jesus Christ to be the only God, in whom dwells the Father or Divine Essence, and *from* whom proceeds the Holy Spirit or Divine Influences, we speak of the Lord Jesus Christ as He now exists in heaven, in that Divine Body in which he rose from the grave; which retained nothing whatever of the imperfect nature received from the human mother, but is divine itself also. This Divine Humanity it is, to which belongs the name so often given to Jesus of “the Son of God;” for it was solely the offspring of the Divine Father; and as Divinity cannot be divided, *was* completely One with the Divine Father, as the soul of man is one with his body. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ while in the world, *so far* as he had anything appertaining to him from the mother, or *so far* as He was the Son of Mary, was not strictly One with the Father: but in proportion as what He received from her was *put off*, and a Divine Human Nature received or brought forth from the Father, *put on* in its place, He advanced towards perfect union: till at length, all the life of the maternal nature being extinguished at the passion of the cross, and the Divine life from the Father being brought down into the lowest natural principle in lieu of it, at the resurrection, He thenceforward, and for ever, was, and is, One with the Father,—One God in One Divine Person; his Divine Soul being the very Father, or what is called God in his inmost essence, and his Divine Body

being the Son of God, or a clothing of the Divine Essence, brought forth solely from that Essence itself, to be the medium of its manifestation to mankind.

Let, however, the last observation I have here made be particularly observed, since, if it be lost sight of, though we should retain the idea of the unity of God, and may believe the Lord Jesus Christ to be He, we yet may be under an erroneous conception of a most serious nature. The observation I mean is, that although the Lord Jesus Christ, while in the world, *put off* everything at first taken from the mother, he *put on* a Divine Human Nature brought forth from the Father in its stead: in fact, no *putting off* ever took place without there being a corresponding *putting on*. The Lord did not, by his death and resurrection, as the conclusion of all his temptations, *merely* put off all the imperfections and all the gross material nature which adhered to Him as the Son of Mary, and so return into his Divine Essence, just as He had come forth from it: otherwise no permanent benefit would have resulted to mortals from his incarnation, and He would be now an invisible, unapproachable, inconceivable, unmanifested God, as before: but He returned into the bosom of Deity perfect Man as well as perfect God. He took with Him everything belonging to human nature, even to the lowest ultimates or extremes; only nothing of it was the same as when first taken from the mother, but all had been completely renewed, all re-produced, from the Father himself. Thus, though everything truly belonging to human nature remained, it was no longer merely human, but was, at the same time, Divine.

This process, then, of putting off the Son of Mary and putting on the Son of God, was continually going on during the whole of the Lord's life in the world; and it was so far completed at the time of the passion of the cross, that nothing then remained unglorified but the material frame. When the life of this was extinguished, all that was the Son of Mary died; and presently, the Divinity within descending into the same sphere, which is described in the emblematic language of Scripture, by the angel of the Lord descending and rolling away the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, the Lord rose again in a Divine Human Body, over which, as the Apostle Paul observes, death has no dominion.

That this is the true view of this divine subject may be proved from numerous Scripture testimonies. I will first mention some which demonstrate, that after Jesus had entered on the work of his ministry, thus when he had already ceased, in a great degree, to be the Son of Mary, he never acknowledged her as his mother.

As He never was, in any but a legal sense, the son of Joseph the husband of Mary, so He never in any degree countenanced the idea that Joseph was his father. Thus, when he had stayed among the doctors in the temple, when twelve years old, and Mary said to him, "*Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing,*" He replied, in terms which implied reproof for ascribing to him any father but the Divine Father, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—not the business of his reputed father, Joseph, but of his Divine and Only Father; and in which language, also, he seems to allow but little of the maternal privileges to Mary. But the mode in which he always spoke to Mary afterwards is truly remarkable, and has given great trouble to the commentators to reconcile it with decent respect. At the wedding in Cana, "the mother of Jesus," as she is called by the historian, "saith unto him, They have no wine." His answer was such as would but indifferently have agreed with the character of a merely human pattern of excellence, speaking to one who was really his mother: He said, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"—words which imply a positive refusal to acknowledge her as his mother, and which can only be accounted for by the fact, that He was at this time, *as to all that spoke and acted in him*, not her Son. So when he hung upon the cross, and "saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! and to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour," it is added, "that disciple took her to his own *home*," as the common translation supplies, though "took her for his own *mother*," would be quite as agreeable to the original. This circumstance is noted by commentators as a mark of the filial piety of Jesus: but, certainly, though it may show his benevolence, it exhibits no mark of *filial* respect, as it includes no acknowledgment that He was her son: and the reason why it is recorded, is, to inform us that



“from that hour”—the hour of his crucifixion,—He was no longer her son in any respect whatever. Accordingly, what would otherwise be unaccountable, she is never afterwards mentioned. Mary Magdalen and other women are spoken of as doing the last offices to his remains, and attending about the sepulchre; but no more mention of Mary who had been mother of Jesus. Her natural affection must surely have led her, had it not been overruled otherwise for an express reason, to be as anxious about Him after his burial as Mary Magdalene was: yet she never appears. It may be imagined that she was prevented by excess of grief: yet, surely, if she could bear to witness his agonies on the cross, nothing that followed afterwards could be beyond her capacity of endurance. At all events, as the news of his resurrection spread like lightning, her grief must then have been turned into joy; and, unquestionably, had she still thought of him as her Son, she would most eagerly have sought once more to clasp him in her arms. Still she does not appear. What could be the reason of this seemingly strange backwardness in one who must have been among the most delighted welcomers of his return to life? What is the meaning of this continued silence respecting her of all the evangelists? It was, first, because all that belonged to the risen Jesus being in a sphere above that of nature, his presence could not be entered into by even the most amiable of the merely natural affections;—but, more especially, because all the feelings of natural maternal love were taken away from Mary with the infinite change which was effected in the person of Jesus,—because it was no longer possible for her to love him familiarly as her Son, whom she *now* loved reverentially as her God. It was to the women that hovered about the sepulchre that the angel addressed the words of our text; and we are informed, in ver. 10, that these were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and *other* women that were with them. Now it is highly probable, that among these *other* women, was Mary who had been the mother of Jesus; but the reason why she is not mentioned, is, because it would be a violation of the sanctity that should attach to the idea of the Lord in his risen body, to use any expression that should revive the idea of his having any real affinity, or

natural relationship, with a finite creature ;—because in Him, now, God was man, and man was God—his Divinity being brought down into the very lowest degrees and principles of Humanity, and his Humanity exalted to a full participation of all the attributes of Divinity ;—because He now was God as to both elements of his being.

Abundantly plain, then, it is, that, after Jesus entered on the work of His ministry, He had already ceased, in a great degree, to be the Son of Mary,—that He finally ceased to bear any natural relationship to her at his resurrection ; and that He never acknowledged her as his mother. But there are numerous other circumstances which demonstrate the truly divine character of his resurrection-body,—such as the manner of his resurrection itself, and the manner of his appearance to his disciples afterwards. First, then, with respect to the manner of his resurrection itself.

That He did rise from the tomb, and with his whole body, is most certain. Not only did the female disciples, as is recorded in our text and in all the other evangelists, receive an assurance from angels that he was not in the sepulchre, but was risen ; not only did all the disciples see from without that the stone was rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, and nothing of a human person left within ; but some entered in, and viewed the place where he had lain ; and Peter and John, it is related, beheld the linen cloths in which his body had been swathed lying where that had been deposited,—and lying, as it would appear, and as the original word implies, as if that which they had enveloped had emerged without unfolding them,—and as is expressly said of the napkin which had been bound round the head, that it lay *wrapped together* in a place by itself. And as it was thus so certain, on the one hand, that the body was gone, it is no less certain, on the other, that Jesus was alive ; for he was repeatedly seen, both on the day of his resurrection, and for forty days afterwards. One circumstance which shows the divine nature of the transaction, is this : that there were no human witnesses of the resurrection itself—the act of coming forth from the tomb ; and no description is given of it by any of the evangelists. When Jesus had previously resuscitated the widow's son of Nain, “he

stopped the bier, and said, Young man, I say unto thee Arise." And, it is added, "he that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother." So, when he had commanded the stone to be removed from the mouth of the grave, of Lazarus, "he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead," the record proceeds to state, "came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face bound about with a napkin:" wherefore Jesus said again to those present, "Loose him, and let him go." All this is perfectly natural, and, with respect to the resurrection from the grave of any finite being in a body of flesh and blood, the circumstances could not be otherwise. Such a body could not be evolved from the grave-clothes without discomposing them, nor be extricated from them, when swathed up in many folds of them, as was the custom with the Jews, without assistance from others; and, most certainly, could not come out of the sepulchral cavern, without, like Lazarus, walking forth. Yet nothing of the sort is related respecting the resurrection of Jesus. His grave-clothes were left, we have seen, undisturbed, in the place where his body had lain; and none of the evangelists gives any account, except by remote and correspondent images, of the manner in which his Divine Person emerged from the sepulchre. An angel came and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre: yet it is not said that the Lord's body thereupon walked forth. According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the female disciples were invited by the angel to view the place where the Lord lay; and according to John, Mary Magdalen beheld two angels, one sitting at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain; and they all afterwards saw Him in various places without the sepulchre: yet neither they, nor the guards who had watched the sepulchre through the night, and who were present when the angel came and rolled away the stone, saw Him come forth. Nor is anything of the nature of a coming forth ever stated respecting Him. The angels say to the women, "He is not here; he is risen:" but they do not define the manner of his rising. The whole is left in the mystery and apparent obscurity so essential to the sublimity of such a subject. He did not rise and go forth as a resuscitated mortal must have done: and

the mode of his resurrection could not have been described in plain terms, without departing from the divine style of writing, composed of simple statements of natural images, in which alone the Word of God could be written ; nor could any terms of human language *plainly* describe it, without limiting and in a manner debasing a subject, which, as being of a nature most purely divine, can never be adequately apprehended by any finite intelligence. Therefore the gospels only speak of it under representative images : in which the whole divine fulness of it is included, though, to those who confine their ideas to the literal expression, they seem not to relate to it all. Thus the angel, it is said in Matthew, rolled back the stone from the door of the sepulchre : but, as we have noticed, it is not said that the Lord thereupon, like Lazarus at *his* call, came forth. The reason is, because, to his coming forth, the rolling away of the stone was by no means necessary. It was done to *represent* an important circumstance connected with the subject : but the Lord's resurrection would equally have taken place, had the grave continued shut with a stone from that hour to this. He who the same evening, and afterwards, suddenly appeared in the midst of the room where the disciples were assembled, though the doors were shut and fastened for fear of the Jews, could not have been confined to the grave, had the stone never been removed from its mouth. Had his body been now of material substance, as before, it could not have come out of the grave without the previous removal of the stone ; nor could it have appeared in the room without the previous opening of the door. It did the latter, because it was now no longer a material body, but a Divine Substantial body, and, as such, was unlimited by the shackles of space, and could experience no obstruction from material substance. And for the same reason, although, to *represent* a certain part of the operation, the angel rolled away the stone, it is never said that the Divine Occupant availed himself of the circumstance to walk out at the aperture. In the same manner as his body, now no longer material but divine, disappeared from within the grave-clothes without discomposing them, it could have emerged from the sepulchre also without disturbing the stone at its mouth. The fact is that his body, being now in full participation of all the properties of Divinity, was invested with the

attribute of omnipresence, and could no longer be limited to any single spot, or confined within the limits of the material universe. With his Humanity, as the Son of Mary, the possession of such an attribute was impossible ; but it is a necessary adjunct of his Humanity as the Son of God.

These remarks may suffice in regard to the nature of the Lord's resurrection itself: but we must also briefly notice the manner of his appearing to the disciples afterwards.

When it is known that the Lord, in his resurrection-body, is *omnipresent*, many circumstances become easily intelligible, which otherwise are involved in inextricable mystery: Thus the circumstance just adverted to, of his appearing in the midst of the room when the doors were shut, is at once made clear and easy; though, upon any other supposition it is beset with inconsistencies. Commentators in general, being possessed with the notion that the Lord's resurrection-body was of material substance, the same as before, do such violence to the plain import of the passage, as to suppose, that, notwithstanding its being expressly said that "Jesus came, *the doors being shut*, and stood in the midst," this only means, that, though they were shut before He came, He opened them by a miracle, and so *walked* in: whereas, admit that He now was in a divine and therefore omnipresent body, and that the disciples saw Him by virtue of the sight of their spirits being opened for the purpose; and we have a view that is in all respects agreeable to the language of the sacred text, and does no violence to any of our perceptions.

Another circumstance which becomes easy of comprehension when it is known that the Lord's resurrection-body was divine, and therefore endued with the attribute of omnipresence, is that of his apparent journey with the two disciples to Emmaus: and which again proves that his resurrection-body must have possessed this attribute. For He was visible, it appears, to these disciples on their journey, and yet appeared to the Apostle Peter at Jerusalem at *the same time*. The evangelist Luke informs us, that two disciples, who were acquainted with all that had taken place at the sepulchre and at Jerusalem in the morning, went the same day to Emmaus, and that, as they went, Jesus himself drew near

and went with them ; and when they had arrived at the village whither they were going, He discovered himself to them, and immediately afterwards vanished out of their sight,—becoming invisible to them, as the original expressly says,—doubtless, by the closing of their spiritual sight, which had previously been opened. They instantly returned with all speed to Jerusalem, to relate what they had witnessed ; where “ they found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,” who said, “ The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.” This appearance to Simon, then, took place *after* the two disciples had left Jerusalem, and *before* their return ; thus, doubtless, the Lord was seen by Simon at Jerusalem, at the very time that he was in company with the travellers to Emmaus ; a circumstance which would be impossible, unless it be admitted that his body was no longer material but divine, and possessed, consequently, of the attribute of omnipresence. It may, indeed, be alleged,—and will, by those who are indisposed to relinquish the gross notion that his resurrection-body was still material,—that He might have appeared to Simon either before he joined the disciples going to Emmaus, or after he had vanished at that place out of their sight, being able to move with such velocity, as to overtake them in the former case, or to outstrip them, in the latter. But what a degrading image does it present of our Lord’s glorified person, to represent Him as posting backwards and forwards, from place to place, with incredible speed, and merely astonishing his disciples by amazing powers of locomotion ! Whereas, how sublime and magnificent is the view, which accounts for the whole by attributing to the Lord’s Risen Person the attribute of Omnipresence ! The whole transaction is thus seen to include nothing low, trifling, and derogatory to the truly divine character of Him who is the great agent in it ; and thus alone it inspires conceptions of perfect holiness, dignity, and majesty,\* and fills the mind with the reverential feelings which properly belong to such a subject.

But let me repeat a truth noticed already. While filling our thoughts with such grand conceptions as have now been offered of the omnipresence and other purely divine attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ in his Risen Person, we must never lose sight

of the momentous fact, on which the salvation of the human race then, and our salvability at the present moment, was and is entirely dependent;—that although the Lord's Resurrection-Body was as now shown, truly Divine, it was still, at the same time, truly Human. He did not *lay down*, or *divest Himself of*, the Human Nature, by his resurrection with the attributes of omnipotence and omnipresence; but He *glorified* that Human Nature, so as to render it at the same time Divine, and thus to impart these divine attributes to the body also. Though He rose again in all respects a God, yea, the only God, his Humanity having become the proper Personal Form of the Divinity and essentially united therewith; yet He rose again also a Man, but a Divine Man, complete. The reason was, as the doctrines which we accept as those of the true Christian religion explicitly teach, because He finally put off the infirm humanity which he had by his birth of a human mother, thus ceasing altogether to be the Son of Mary, and put on the Divine Humanity brought forth into ultimates from the Father or Divine Essence, which is properly the Son of God. All the residue of the infirm humanity was, indeed, rejected by his death and burial; but all the fulness in ultimates of the Divine Humanity was put on at his resurrection. We should therefore gain but little, while coming to the conclusion that the Lord's Resurrection-Body is purely Divine, were we to lose the conviction that He is nevertheless a Man,—God-Man,—having the ultimates of Human Nature in a Divine Human Form. So essential, according to our doctrines, is the maintenance of this conviction, that it is better, they affirm, even to worship an idol, than to lose the idea of God as a Man. And that the Lord had, after his resurrection, the very ultimates of human nature, and differed essentially from all mere spirits, He taught when He said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." That these, however, were, nevertheless, no longer material, but divinely-substantial, having been renewed as to their very substance from the Divinity within, is equally certain from what we have already demonstrated, that his Resurrection-Body was unconscious of the shackles of either

space or time, and was fully possessed of the purely divine attribute of Omnipresence.

But we must hasten to a conclusion. And from all that has been advanced it may, I should hope, be affirmed with certainty, that to consider the Lord Jesus, after his resurrection, as being still like any ordinary man,—thus to view Him as being still, in any respect the Son of Mary,—and to regard his Resurrection-Body as anything lower than Divine, is to seek the living among the dead. There is but one Living Principle in the whole universe,—in the whole of the worlds, both moral and material; and this is only in God Himself,—yea, it is God Himself. All things else that live, live not by anything of their own, but by the reception of life, continually flowing from God as light flows from the sun, so that if the life thus flowing from God were shut out from created things a single moment, that moment would universal death envelope all; just as the world must instantly be involved in darkness, should anything shut out from it the rays of the sun. All things but God, then, regarded in themselves, are dead: nothing can be called living but God alone. But God is Life itself, not only with respect to his Essential Divinity, but also with respect to his Divine Humanity; for Jesus says, “As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” To look then upon Jesus as in any respect like a finite man, whether this be done by regarding him in all respects as a mere man, or by allowing him to have Divinity somehow attached to him, but still considering his Human Nature, even after his resurrection, as not participating in his Divinity,—this is to seek the living among the dead,—to reckon Him among the dead sons of earth, who is the Source of life to everything that exists. It is true that the Apostle says, that our vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body; but to infer from hence that ours will be the same in kind as his, is to suppose that, because man was created in the likeness of God, he is therefore a being of the same kind as God. God is the Original,—we are the derivations: He is the Source: we are the recipients from that Source: In one word, He is Infinite,—and we are, and ever must be, infinitely beneath



Him,—faint, finite shadows. To imagine any other,—to view Him in any lower a light,—is to seek the LIVING ONE (as the original term strictly signifies) among the dead.

No! my brethren! let us not be guilty of this infatuation. Instructed by the voice of the angel, let us learn to reverence Him as we ought. Let us rise from earthly, low, carnal ideas of Him, to a sense of His infinite greatness. He is not here: He is risen: and we must rise in our sentiments if we would obtain any just conceptions respecting Him. Let us remember, too, what it is that is risen. It is not his Essential Divine Nature; for this could never for a moment cease to be the Supreme, the Most High. What is risen is the Human Nature, exalted to perfect Oneness with the Inmost Divinity. Let us then ever think of the Lord Jesus Christ, even as to his Human Nature, as "God over all, blessed for evermore." Let us love Him and obey Him as such: and then, as He declares, "because *He liveth*, we shall live also," by a participation of the true life, which, in its essence, is Himself. In the language of the Apostle, "he will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned *like unto* his Glorious Body; according to the mighty working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself;—which is only another mode of stating the great truth,—that, by the Omnipotence which belongs to Him in his Human Nature, He will recreate us into the image and likeness of God.

## LECTURE IX.

THE REASONABLENESS, TOGETHER WITH THE SCRIPTURE-EVIDENCE, OF THE GREAT TRUTH, THAT IT WAS THE ONE GOD HIMSELF, AND NOT ANY SON OF GOD BORN FROM ETERNITY, THAT DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN, FOR THE PURPOSE OF REDEEMING AND SAVING MANKIND.

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ISA. ix. 6.

*"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."*

My design in the Lectures which I have now for some weeks been engaged in delivering, mainly is, as I have intimated before, to convince those who may be so far interested in the subjects announced as to give them their attention, that there is at this day a system of religious doctrine existing in the world, to which the objections made by those who are called Infidels against the Christian religion in general do not at all apply; a system, also, which combines the advantages that the most opposite sects of Christians, such as the Unitarians and the Tripersonalists, each, respectively, aim at securing by maintaining their distinguishing sentiments; a system which looks with shyness upon no class of texts contained in the Bible, from a feeling that they are unfavourable to itself and yield countenance to its adversaries, but claims for its authority and support the whole Word of God, the whole Bible without exception. These are high claims which we venture to put forth to your attention: but, surely they are not greater than ought justly to belong to the True Christian Religion. The True Christian Religion, most unquestionably, ought to be in harmony with all the scriptures of truth, and to have the

suffrages in its favour of genuine reason also. Nor, in making these claims for the system of doctrine which we believe to be the truth, do we arrogate any merit whatever for ourselves ; for it is not of our own invention ; and we do not esteem ourselves, for having received it, at all superior to others who have not. On the same ground, we do not impute blame to those who adhere to systems which we believe to be erroneous : for, erroneous or not, they are not the invention of the present generation. We regard it as our duty to cultivate a spirit of kindness towards all : in proposing sentiments to your consideration which we believe to be most true, and to be conducive to the best interests of man, we mean to do it with all kindness, deference, and respect for others. I trust, therefore, that you will continue to lend your most candid and favourable attention to the views which I am to offer ; and that, should I be led, in the course of my observations, even to speak strongly of doctrines which you may hitherto have followed, that you will not imagine any such remarks to be of a personal character, or to be indicative of feelings of disrespect towards any human being. After the resurrection, but before the ascension, of our blessed Lord, a party of his disciples went to labour at their old occupation as fishermen : but that night, the Evangelist records, they caught nothing. Now this, though truly a literal fact, had, we are convinced, a spiritual and typical meaning. When Jesus first called his disciples from their nets to be his Apostles, He said unto them, " Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men ;" by which he obviously means, instructors of mankind in the truths of the gospel, and instruments of bringing them into the Lord's Church. By its being said then of the Apostles, that they toiled all night, and caught nothing, is representatively shown, the small fruit that attends the preaching of the truth, while it is taught as matter of doctrine only, unaccompanied with its proper heavenly affection, and the teachers remain in the night of their own selfhood. But " when the morning was come," the same divine narrative adds, " Jesus stood on the shore ;" and He said unto the labouring Apostles, " Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find." They did so, and now, " they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." To cast the net on the

right side of the ship, denotes, in that symbolic language in which the Word of God is written, to teach the truth under the influence of the affections of love and charity. This then we acknowledge to be our duty; and this duty we endeavor to fulfil. But still, in order to its being crowned with success, it must be the morning state with the hearers as well as with the teachers. The heavenly sun of divine love and light must be risen in the east, and must be influencing the hearts of those who listen as well as of those who speak. Let us then now lift up our hearts to the Source of all light and truth, with a sincere desire to be rightly grounded in the knowledge of our God and Saviour, and that, knowing Him aright, we may the better perform his will, and be better prepared for beholding Him as He is when our day of probation is ended, and the veil of sense and nature is removed from before our eyes.

Among the principal subjects which have occupied our attention, and which we have endeavored to establish, in our preceding Lectures, have been the Essential Nature of the Divine Object of worship, as being Love itself and Wisdom itself, or Goodness itself and Truth itself; the Absolute Unity, both in Essence and Person, of the Divine Object of worship, with the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, as being in perfect harmony with such Absolute Unity.

According to this view of this sacred subject, we have one God in one Divine Person as our only Object of worship: wherefore, having considered also, his Proper Personality and Divine Form, we proceeded, in our last Lecture but one, to inquire more particularly Who this one God is; when we endeavoured to show, that the Divine Name, Jesus Christ, is the name of Jehovah in his Humanity: and thus that this is the one God in whom the whole Trinity centres. This we did by considering various parts of the description of Jesus Christ given in the first chapter of the Revelation, and comparing them with passages in which the same titles are declared, in other parts of Scripture, to belong to Jehovah only; particularly that truly divine title, so obviously descriptive of sole, supreme, and exclusive Divinity, which Jesus Christ takes to Himself when he says to John the Divine, "Fear not, I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST." This sacred and incom-

municable title, together with that other most sublime divine designation which Jesus also indisputably takes to Himself, as being HIM WHO IS AND WHO WAS AND WHO IS TO COME, which is in fact a translation of all that is expressed in the Hebrew word JEHOVAH;—these alone, amid many other evidences that might be offered, irrefragably demonstate, that Jesus is Jehovah indeed, and that the divine name Jesus Christ is properly the name of Jehovah in his Humanity. But, as I observed at the same time, I am perfectly aware that objections will arise in the minds of many to the admission of this sentiment. That the Divine Being is most absolutely One, and that the Trinity in the Divine Nature is such as is in perfect harmony with such Absolute Oneness, are sentiments which most may hear without surprise, and which all who are not strongly confirmed in opposing doctrines will be readily disposed to accept: but to hear it affirmed that He who appeared on earth in outward form as a man, and who, though He had no human father, was actually born of a woman, is Jehovah Himself clothed with human nature;—this will, I am perfectly aware, appear incredible to many, and repugnant to the perceptions of natural reason. The doctrine of Jehovah's assuming Humanity is what is called by the prophet, whose words are applied to the subject by two Apostles, "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." Nevertheless, that the doctrine is true, follows of necessity, when it is admitted, that the Unity of the Divine Nature is such as to exclude all division of persons, and that there nevertheless exists in it a Trinity, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We noticed the objection that is made against this doctrine, on the supposition that, if it were true, the Deity must have left the throne of heaven vacant, and shut Himself up in a body of human flesh on earth; an objection, we showed, which is only founded on erroneous conceptions, or rather on total ignorance, of the Divine Omnipresence. We also showed, that the body or outward person of Jesus Christ was produced not by any local descent of Jehovah from heaven, but by an emanation of the Divine Power and Virtue; which, likewise, continued to operate upon it during the whole time of the residence of Jesus Christ on earth, gradually assimilating it to its own nature: and that this wonderful operation was finally com-

pleted at his resurrection and ascension, when his Humanity was fully glorified, or assimilated in its nature to that of the Divine Essence, so as to be the suitable organ for the exercise of the Divine Omnipotence. This great point was further established, and I hope conclusively, in our last Lecture, when we treated of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Divine Nature of his Resurrection-Body. This, however, is a subject of such vast importance, that we shall take it up again, and look at it under other aspects: at present we will endeavour to remove some other objections, and to establish more firmly the great truth, that Jesus Christ is Jehovah himself clothed with Humanity, by endeavouring to evince *The Reasonableness, together with the Scripture evidence, of the great truth, that it was the One God Himself, and not, as commonly taught, a Son of God born from eternity that assumed Humanity, for the purpose of redeeming and saving mankind.*

It is the very greatness of this event—that Jehovah Himself assumed humanity for the salvation of mankind—which influences the minds of so many to deny it their belief. If, however, the greatness of an event be sufficient reason for questioning its reality, we may carry our scepticism to extravagant lengths indeed.

That an Infinite God, possessing all fulness in Himself, should condescend even to the work of creation, has itself seemed so extraordinary to some, that they have denied the fact: but as the creation stands displayed before our eyes, and obvious to the senses of the most gross and superficial observer, so that the reality of its existence, in some manner, cannot be disputed, they have ventured to put the negative upon the other part of the proposition, and have denied that the creation owes its origin to a Creator. Hence they are called *Atheists*, or Deniers of God. But all room for the absurd arguments of such reasoners would be taken away, were it generally and heartily acknowledged, as was endeavoured to be proved in former Lectures, that the first attribute of the Divine Nature, constituting the very Essence of Deity, is Infinite Love. As Love cannot rest without objects whom it may benefit, it may naturally be presumed, since God can have no fellow-gods to be the objects of his love, that his Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Power, which are the two other

most essential of the divine attributes, would be called into exercise to create such objects : and so vast being the cravings, so to speak, of Infinite Love, we cannot wonder at beholding so boundless a universe created from its energies. And the same great cause—the Infinity of Divine Love—will adequately account for the other great wonder which we are now contemplating.

Many, it is true, who allow that the creation must have had an Author, not having, still, an adequate idea of the cause of creation, as originating in Infinite Love, regard this other great event ;—that of the Creator's assuming Humanity for the benefit of his creation, —as so much more extraordinary, that they refuse to admit it. Some of these, taking a name from their acknowledgment of God as a Creator, without admitting the acknowledgment of Him as a Redeemer, or the inspired volume which records His having become such, are denominated *Deists*. But beside these, there are many who are called Christians, who, while they profess to acknowledge a Redeemer, and confess that a certain superior Being really did become Incarnate, will by no means allow, that the Being who exhibited this miracle of love was the sole Supreme Being, Jehovah himself, the creator of heaven and earth. That the Infinite Jehovah Himself should assume Humanity, Christians in general unite with Deists to pronounce incredible. But here, again, if it be true that the first attribute of Deity is Infinite Love, why doubt it ? Can anything necessary for the well-being of the creation He had formed be too much for such Love to undertake ? anything too difficult for the Wisdom and Power belonging to it to perform ?

But let the subject be looked into a little more deeply. It may be asked, Are we absolutely certain that it was possible for God to create a universe, so as that it should be permanent, without taking this method of rendering it so, by uniting it with Himself ? The question, possibly, may surprise not a few. Still, let it be solemnly inquired, Have we the means of knowing with certainty, that the permanence of the creation could have been secured, without the Creator's uniting it with Himself, by actually clothing Himself with the nature of the being whom He had placed at its head ? "Most certainly it could," multitudes will be ready to answer : "God is Omnipotent, and Omnipotence

can do whatsoever it pleases :—Undoubtedly, we reply ; Omnipotence *can* do whatsoever it pleases ;—but why ? Simply, because, whatever end it wishes to accomplish, it can provide *the means* necessary for effecting it. But to advance to the accomplishment of its ends without the provision of appropriate means, is as impossible to Divine Omnipotence, as it is for a man to execute any piece of neat workmanship without arms and hands. Thus, for instance, every one must be sensible, that God could not have created the great masterpiece of his visible workmanship, man, such as he actually is, without creating a world for him to dwell on, and vegetables or animals designed for his food : these, therefore, were *first* produced, as means to an ulterior end ; which end was, that man might exist. In like manner, it might easily be shown, that the world, with man himself, is but created as a means to a still further end ; which is, that a heaven might exist, formed of the spirits of just men made perfect. Thus it is obvious, that neither this end nor the former could be accomplished, even by Omnipotence itself, except by the production of the means necessary to their existence ; and the very essence of Omnipotence consists in this,—in being able to produce the means by which the purposes of Infinite Love and Wisdom may be brought into effect.

Now to apply this to the probable necessity, in order to the permanence of the creation, that the Creator should conjoin Himself with his rational creatures by the assumption of Human Nature.

In order to the continuance in existence of the beings who had been created, it is evident that there must be a perpetual communication of a principle of life from Him who is self-existent. It is no less evident, that this life could not be possessed by them a moment, independently of such continued communication, without their being self-existent likewise : and to make them such, is plainly beyond the reach of even Divine Omnipotence ; because this would be to create other Gods. It is then perfectly clear, that creation cannot be continued a moment, either in heaven or in the world, without a continual communication to rational beings of a principle of life from the Self-existent. But (as could easily be proved had we time to go into



that enquiry) the natural world, and man as to that part of him by which he is an inhabitant of the natural world, is the basis, as it were, on which the heavens rest, comparatively as the external world is the basis on which man rests ; it follows, therefore, that the heavens themselves cannot be rendered permanent unless their basis be so ; and as all permanence depends upon a conjunction with the Self-subsisting, it is evident that such conjunction must be established between man, in his state while in the world, and God. Now suppose that there were no means by which this could be effected, except by God's condescending to take the Human Principle on Himself, and to glorify or assimilate it to his own Divine Nature, by letting himself down, as it were, in a wonderful manner, into it ; but that, when this was effected, the divine communications of life and all good could be conveyed from the Divine Humanity, thus assumed, into the imperfect human nature of man, and thus the permanence of creation be secured. This then, we are satisfied, and the circumstances of the fall of man evince, was the case. This, therefore, was the design of the Incarnation of Jehovah, and this the first great benefit resulting from it. By this grand operation, the Creator, after having first produced his work, as it were invested Himself with it ; as a man puts on a garment which he has previously prepared. As, also, a man could not put on a material garment unless he had a natural body adapted to such a covering ; so neither could the Creator clothe Himself, as it were, with his visible creation, till He had invested Himself, as his proper body, with a Divine Natural Principle, or with a Divine Human Nature. Considered under another image, the universe thus became, in a manner, a body, of which God, as to his Divine Humanity, is the soul ; and which he can uphold, by a communication of life imparted from Himself, for ever ;—the immediate life of all created existence being an emanation proceeding from his Divine Humanity.

Such a conjunction, then, of his creation with Himself, the Divine Being must have had in view from the commencement of creation, and before it : and this, in the fulness of time, He effected, by taking Humanity of a virgin mother. This is what Paul means, when he speaks repeatedly of “ the eternal pur-

pose" of God, and of His "purpose from the foundation of the world." Accordingly, this His purpose God himself announced from the very beginning of the records of Divine Revelation, by the prediction, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; and more plainly afterwards in many sublime prophecies; such as that quoted by Matthew from Isaiah: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son; and ye shall call his name Immanuel;" "which," as the evangelist adds, "being interpreted, is, God with us." I am well aware of the interpretation which the infidel Paine and the German Rationalists, who herein are joined by the Unitarians, give of this prophecy, affirming that it relates to a child who was to be born to the prophet Isaiah; but supposing it to have an immediate and very imperfect reference to the prophet's son, (whose name, however, was not called Immanuel, but Maher-shalal-hashbaz,) this does not prevent its pointing principally and ultimately to Him who was truly and literally born of a virgin, of whom the son born to the prophet was a type, and who was in truth by nature Immanuel, or God with us. The prophet announces that a virgin *should* conceive and bear a son; and the evangelist declares that a virgin *was* with child and brought forth a son; and the Eternal Father was the sole agent who caused her to bear this Son; for, as we shall see presently, no proper Son of God ever existed before. This Son then could be no other than a Human Form adapted for the full indwelling of the Divine Essence from which it originated; according to the Lord's statement when He says, "The Father which dwelleth in me." Most completely, then, was Jesus intitled to the name, "Immanuel, God with us;" He being God by virtue of the indivisibility of the Divine Essence, which dwelt in Him bodily, so that He was truly God in a human personal form; and He being *God with us*, the otherwise unapproachable, inconceivable Divine Essence was thus brought into a manifestation capable of being approached, known, and apprehended by his creatures. Thus were they enabled, also, to enter into states of permanent conjunction with Him, and thus to enjoy eternal life; according to his own words: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall

never die." He that was born, then, is God with us, and God alone. It was the One God Himself who thus invested Himself, with Human Nature; and when respect is had to the greatness of the end,—the salvation of the human race and the permanent conjunction of the creation with the Creator,—to the fact, that this great end could no otherwise be accomplished,—and to the inconceivable ardor of that Infinite Love which burnt in the breast of Deity for its accomplishment;—then the grand transaction is seen to be, however admirable and stupendous, not more wonderful than credible, and most reasonably worthy of adoring acceptance.

This view of the origin, the necessity, the design, and the mode of accomplishment, of the assumption of Humanity by Jehovah himself, must surely tend to remove the objections which may at first present themselves to the mind on hearing such a doctrine. But when it is seen further, that the Human Nature and Form thus assumed is not that of mere human nature, but that, by a glorifying process, as shown in our last Lecture, it was perfectly assimilated to the Divine Nature, everything partaking of human infirmity being removed;—then every consideration is afforded that can make the whole doctrine of the assumption of Humanity by Jehovah perfectly credible in itself, and perfectly satisfactory to the rational mind. Even the natural body, it is to be remembered, was conceived of Jehovah, and was, as to its inmost principles, divine from conception, having for its inmost soul the whole Divine Essence. The Divine Essence, while the Lord Jesus Christ was living as a man in the world, was in the continual effort to assimilate the assumed Humanity to itself. In the interior forms of that human nature a glorifying process was going on, from the first to the last moment of his life. The Divine Principle within kept descending lower and lower, imparting its own divine nature to the interior forms of the human essence in succession; extirpating everything that partook of human infirmity,—everything, in fact, that was derived from the mother; but yet retaining every human principle entire, though rendered infinitely perfect and truly divine. When all that belongs to man beyond or above the mere shell of clay had been submitted to this wonderful process, the cruci-

fixion took place : and then the merely human life being altogether extinct, the divine life descended to the extremes of the bodily frame, renewing the whole by its descent. This fully accomplished, He arose again with his human form complete, nothing being lost or left behind,—a truly Divine Man, having in his Glorious Person everything, and every principle, which is found in the constitution of man, but all perfectly assimilated in nature to the pure Divinity Itself. In this Divine Humanity, therefore, He is truly the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,—the very immediate *Esse* or Source of being to everything that exists, the immediate Upholder and Supporter of all things, both in heaven and in earth. Thus the child once born, the son once given, is of a truth the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, upon whose shoulders, of right, the government rests, and to whom belong glory and dominion for ever.

These remarks, I cannot but hope, will be sufficient in some measure to evince the reasonableness of the sublime and most important doctrine, that it was the One God Himself, and not a Son of God born from eternity, that descended from heaven for the purpose of redeeming and saving mankind. Part of the Scripture evidence of the same great truth has also been brought forward ; and more will presently be adduced. But perhaps it may be useful first to say a little more on the subject of the Son of God that the Scriptures speak of, and to show that they lend no countenance to the notion of a Son of God born from eternity.

As we have shown that there is truly a Trinity in the Divine Nature, though such a one as is not incompatible with the indivisible unity of the Divine Person, and that the three Essentials of Deity composing this Trinity, are what are called in the New Testament the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ; it may at first seem extraordinary to deny the existence of a Son of God from eternity. What is meant to be denied is, not the existence from eternity of the second Essential of the Trinity, but the propriety of calling it the *Son of God*, before the incarnation. The Son of God, in all the Scriptures is used as the name of the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ,—of the Human Nature put on in the

world : and this certainly did not exist actually till thus assumed. In the annunciation to the virgin by the angel Gabriel, it is declared to her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; wherefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God : " that is, in the well-known idiom of the Hebrew and Hellenic languages, " shall be the Son of God." That the Son of God is then the proper title of the Humanity assumed in the world, is, from this passage, unquestionable. The Lord's *Divine Nature* was not born of the Virgin Mary : such a thought would be monstrous in the extreme. What was thus born was, and could be, the *Human Nature only*. But it was that which was so born that is expressly denominated the *Son of God*.

In agreement with this view of the subject, we find no mention of a Son of God ever made in the Old Testament, except prophetically, and in plain reference to the birth of Jesus Christ. Can it be supposed, that if there had been a Son of God, properly so called, from eternity, mankind would have been left without any intimation whatever of his existence during the whole period over which the writings of the Old Testament extend,—in fact, according to the Scripture chronology, for more than two-thirds of the whole amount of the present age of the world,—from the beginning of creation, to the coming of Jesus Christ? The translators of the English Bible have indeed made Nebuchadnezzar speak of the Son of God as being seen walking with the three pious Jews in the fiery furnace : but all the learned acknowledge that this is a mistranslation, and that Nebuchadnezzar did not mean to denominate the being he saw the Son of God, but, agreeably to his notions as a heathen, a Son of the Gods,—that is, as he is expressly denominated a few verses below, an *angel*. The passage in which the Redeemer is most expressly promised under the title of the Son of God, is in the second Psalm, where the inspired Psalmist, speaking in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he often represents, says, "I will declare the decree : The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son : this day have I begotten thee : " which, all acknowledge, does not relate to the existence of a Son of God from eternity, but to his approaching birth in time. There are also two passages in which

the Redeemer is promised under the name of a Son in Isaiah. The first is that which we have already noticed in the seventh chapter. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and ye shall call his name Immanuel:" which obviously relates, not to any Son of God previously existing from eternity, but to the Humanity that was to be born of the virgin Mary. The other passage is that which we have read as a text: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful; Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." Evidently, this prophecy also relates to a Son who *was to be* born, not to a Son of God *already* born, according to the solecism commonly in use, *from eternity*. Most certain then it is, that there is not any intimation given in all the Bible of any Son of God, except the Human Form produced and assumed by Jehovah through the instrumentality of the virgin Mother. The second Essential of the Divine Trinity, as it existed before the incarnation, is called "*the Word*:" of which it is said, in the opening of John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The *Word* is obviously the *Divine Truth*, which cannot exist in separation from, but only in the most perfect union with, the Divine Good or Love, forming therewith one God, one Divine Person. This *Word*, it is, as is expressly declared, a few verses below in the same chapter, which was "*made flesh*:"—and when thus made flesh, or brought into an outward and natural manifestation for the salvation of beings in this natural state of existence, it takes, with its new form, a new name, and is called *the Son of God*. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, my friends and brethren, in regard to this subject: and you will find this to be the plain amount of their testimony, from one end to the other. In the Old-Testament-period, the Son of God is announced as *to be* born: in the New Testament it is related that he *was* born accordingly: but neither in the Old Testament nor the New is any intimation given of a Son of God *born from eternity*.

Clear enough then, I apprehend, you will admit it to be, that it was not any being properly called a Son of God from eternity, —especially that it was no being existing separately as a Divine

Person distinct from the One Jehovah,—that descended from heaven to redeem and save mankind; but that it was the One Jehovah Himself, yet more especially as to the second Essential of his nature, which is the Divine Truth, that condescended to this act of Infinite Love.

This great truth, that it was the One God Himself who, by assuming Humanity, became the Redeemer and Saviour of mankind, is further demonstrated by the fact, that the prophets continually apply these titles, and *that* exclusively, to Jehovah Himself. To recite some passages from Isaiah alone. First, as to the title of Saviour: "I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour," (xliii. 3). "I, even I, am Jehovah, and beside me there is no Saviour" (ver. 11). "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (xliv. 15). Next, as to the title of Redeemer: "I will help thee, saith Jehovah and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (xli. 14). "Thus saith Jehovah your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (xliii. 14). "Thus saith Jehovah thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb: I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself," (xliv. 24). "Thus saith Jehovah thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am Jehovah your God" (xlviii. 17). "As for our Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel," (xlvii. 4). "Thus saith Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One" (xlix. 7). "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith Jehovah thy Redeemer" (liv. 8). "Thou, O Jehovah, art our father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting," (lxiii. 16). Lastly, as to both titles together: "All flesh shall know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob," (xlix. 26). "Thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob," (lx. 10). Now when the Redeemer and Saviour is mentioned, what Christian ever thinks of any other Being than the Lord Jesus Christ? He "hath obtained eternal *redemption* for us," (Heb. ix. 12). "He came that he might *redeem* us from all iniquities," (Tit. ii. 14). "Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall *save* his people from their sins," (Mat. i. 21). "Neither is there *salvation* in any

other, for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be *saved*," (Acts, iv. 12). So, Jesus is the *only* Saviour. But the prophets declare that this is only true of Jehovah Himself: "I am Jehovah, and beside me there is *no* Saviour"—"a just God and a Saviour; there is *none* beside me." But all is explained, when we acknowledge, that Jesus and Jehovah are one and the same Omnipotent God; Jesus being the name which He took when He assumed the Humanity, in and by which he accomplished the works of redemption and salvation; and Jehovah being the name by which He previously revealed Himself, and engaged to accomplish those works, and thus to become eternally the Saviour and Redeemer.

Combining together all that has now been offered, I would fain hope that the propositions which it was the design of this Lecture to establish will be seen to be true: namely, *That it was the One God Himself, and not any Son of God born from eternity, that descended from heaven for the purpose of redeeming and saving mankind; and That this doctrine is both highly reasonable in itself, and is supported by the most conclusive Scripture-testimony.* We have seen that, for anything that any one can show to the contrary, it might have been impossible for the Creator to have provided for the permanent existence of his creation, except by conjoining it with Himself, by clothing Himself with the nature of the being whom He had placed at the head of it, and for whose sake, and thus through whom, all the inferior parts of the creation were called into existence. And if the first Essential of Deity is Infinite Love, we may be sure that there is nothing too great for the God of love to undertake, nothing too much for him to condescend to, to perpetuate the existence, and to advance the happiness, of his rational creatures. As to the notion that it was not the One Jehovah Himself, but a Son of God born from eternity, that assumed Humanity for this purpose; this, we have ascertained, is a notion both absurd and self-contradictory, viewed by the eye of reason, and for which there is not even a shadow of foundation in the Word of God; there being, throughout the Old Testament, no trace of a Son of God as then existing; and the Old Testament uniting with the New in testifying, that that which is denominated the Son of



God, is the Humanity conceived by the power of the Highest and born of the Virgin Mary. So, we find, the Old Testament most copiously testifies that Jehovah himself is the Saviour and Redeemer, and that there is none beside him; while the New Testament proves that there is none beside Jesus Christ; fully evincing that it was Jehovah Himself who thus assumed Humanity, and that Jesus Christ is no other than the Supreme and Only God manifested in the flesh. May no minute reasonings, the result of partial views and defective information, preclude any of us from the benefits consequent upon the acknowledgment of this glorious truth! All objections as will be still further seen in our succeeding Lectures, vanish into nothing, when placed before the radiance of pure Divine Truth, or when the genuine truth in regard to the subjects of them is brought to light. Let us then submit, in heart, and mind, and life, to be the willing and consistent subjects of Jehovah in his Humanity; acknowledging that Humanity to be the Child born, the Son given; and that his name therein, as expressive of his inherent attributes, is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace."

## LECTURE X.

THE REASONABLENESS, AS WELL AS SCRIPTURE-EVIDENCE, OF THE IMPORTANT TRUTH, THAT THE ASSUMPTION OF HUMANITY INTO GOD, INSTEAD OF LIMITING THE DIVINE INFINITY AND OMNIPOTENCE, AFFORDED THE MEANS OF THEIR MORE FULL MANIFESTATION AND EXERCISE.

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EXOD. VI. 2, 3.

*“ And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.”*

IN points of religion, when any doctrine is proposed which is thought to be new, that single circumstance is alone considered by great numbers of persons,—by all those of limited conceptions and merely common-place and vulgar minds,—a sufficient reason for pronouncing it to be wrong. In all other matters, improvements are looked for as things of course, and no one is prejudiced enough to imagine, that, in them, novelty must necessarily be synonymous with error: yet, in theology, this is assumed by many as an infallible rule of judgment. This is not, however, the rule of judgment with those, whose judgment is worthy of attention. Only to instance the much respected Dr. Watts. He, in his very popular work on the *Improvement of the Mind*, makes these truly intelligent and candid observations: “ Every age, since the Reformation, hath thrown some further light on difficult texts and paragraphs of the Bible, which have been long obscured by the early rise of Antichrist; and since there are at present many difficulties and darknesses hanging about certain truths of the Christian religion; and since several of these relate to important doctrines,—as the origin of sin,

the fall of Adam, *the person of Christ, the blessed Trinity*, and the decrees of God, &c.—*which do still embarrass the minds of honest and enquiring readers*;—it is certain that there are several things in the Bible yet unknown and unexplained; and it is certain that there is some way to solve these difficulties, and to reconcile these seeming contradictions.” And he adds a little afterwards, “Happy is every man who shall be favoured of heaven to give a helping hand towards the introduction of that blessed age of light and love!” These are the sentiments both of genuine intelligence and of genuine piety. Dr. Watts had discernment to perceive, and candour to acknowledge, that there were, in his day, many difficulties and darkneses hanging about certain truths of the Christian Religion; he particularly mentions, as involved in those difficulties and darkneses, the doctrines respecting the person of Christ and the blessed Trinity: and, most certainly, no views upon these subjects have been offered, tending in any degree to dissipate these difficulties and darkneses, since the time of Dr. Watts, except in those doctrines to which I am endeavouring, in these Lectures, to invite a little attention. That further light than is afforded in the doctrines commonly held at this day, is to be expected in regard to the doctrines of the Trinity and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, is evident from this consideration alone, that those doctrines take all that is contained in the Lord’s discourses in the Gospels respecting Himself and the Father in the most superficial and purely literal sense that his words will admit: whereas the Lord Himself expressly teaches that He does not mean to be thus superficially understood, but that all that he said respecting Himself and the Father is spoken in a figurative manner. When concluding his long discourse with his disciples contained in the latter part of John, from chap. xiii. to xvi., He says, “These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs,” or, as it is given in the margin, “in parables.” This is a plain declaration, that all that he had before said respecting his Father, was spoken in the way of parable: and yet it is always taken by theological writers, and the framers of creeds, as if it were spoken in the plainest terms,—as if all his meaning were obvious upon the very face of his words,—and thus as if, when

he speaks of his Father, he spoke of a Divine Person different from Himself. Evidently, then, according to this divine declaration, doctrines thus framed must be mixed with error: and it cannot be unreasonable to expect, that, at some time or other, the truth would be discovered. Accordingly, this, also, is expressly asserted in the same divine statement of the Lord Jesus Christ. He does not merely say, "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs (or parables,)" but he adds, further, "the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs (or parables), but shall show you plainly of the Father." To Christians in general, has that time ever come yet? Whatever clearness of perception the apostles themselves might receive respecting it after the day of Pentecost, certainly, such plainness has never yet been general in the Church. Disputes respecting the person of our Lord, and his relation to the Father, arose in the very first ages; and the decisions of the council of Nice, and the Athanasian Creed, tended still more to involve the subject in obscurity. Does the Christian Church, as existing generally at the present day, possess the promised plain knowledge of the Father? Is it to be found in the doctrine of the Trinity, as commonly maintained? Alas! what pretensions to plainness can be claimed for a doctrine, whose advocates prepare the minds of their disciples for receiving it, by telling them that they must never hope to understand it,—that it is, in truth, utterly incomprehensible? Surely, with the promise in our bibles that the doctrine of the Trinity and of the relation of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Father should be made plain, and with the knowledge which we all have that in the doctrines of all Christian Churches at present existing it is avowedly anything but plain, we ought at any rate to look with candour upon any new view which professes to clear the doctrine from its obscurity, and which boldly claims, and not without good grounds, when fairly examined, to make the subject at least consistent, and to combine in its favour all the suffrages of Reason and all the testimony of the Scriptures. I cannot but think that all whose minds are not fully occupied by pre-conceived opinions, must allow this to be the case with respect to the view that has been given in our previous Lectures of the absolute Unity, both

in Essence and in Person, of the Divine Object of worship, and of the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, as being in perfect harmony with the most Absolute Unity. No one can easily stifle the plain dictates of reason, which here strive to make themselves heard ; and no one can easily put aside the express declarations of Scripture, which here assert precisely the same thing as is dictated by reason. The view of the Trinity then which regards the Father, not as a separately existing Person, but as the inmost Divine Essence,—the Son, also, not as another separately existing Person, but as the personal Form, the Manifestation to created beings, of the existence of that Inmost Divine Essence,—and the Holy Spirit, again, not as a third separately existing Person, but as the Influence and Operation of the Divine Essence and Divine Person in conjunction on human minds ;—the view which thus finds, that man was truly created, as is declared in the beginning of the Bible, in the image and likeness of God, his soul being formed as a finite image of that Divine Essential, which, in the language of proverb and parable in which, we have seen, the Lord Jésus Christ always spoke upon this subject, is called the Father,—his body being formed as a finite image of the Divine Essential, called, in the same divine language, the Son,—and the influence and operation of his soul and body in union on persons and things around him, being a finite image of the Divine Essential called in the same manner the Holy Spirit ;—this view of this sublime subject, must, allow me to say, recommend itself to every unprejudiced lover of truth, of Scripture, of Christianity, and of consistency. But still, as I have remarked in former Lectures, when it is stated as a consequence of this doctrine, that it was the one Infinite Jehovah Himself, and not any separate and subordinate being or person, that assumed Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, I am aware, that many will feel a degree of repugnance against admitting the assertion. It may be thought, that for God thus to unite himself with manhood, would limit his infinity and restrict his omnipotence. To meet the objection drawn from the very greatness of such a transaction, and of the divine condescension implied in it, on the supposition that the Being who thus assumed Humanity was the Infinite Jehovah

Himself, I last Lord's day evening endeavoured in some measure to evince, *the Reasonableness, together with the Scripture Evidence, of the great truth, that it was the One God Himself, and not any Son of God born from eternity, that descended from heaven for the purpose of redeeming and saving mankind.* In the present and another Lecture, I will endeavour to meet what further objections may remain, by some observations in behalf of *the Reasonableness, as well as Scripture Evidence, of the important truth, that the assumption of Humanity into God, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, afforded the means of their more full Manifestation and Exercise.*

I have in part taken the language of this proposition from the Athanasian Creed. In that creed, though it has been the means of establishing a most erroneous doctrine respecting the Divine Trinity, in consequence of its making that Trinity a Trinity of Persons, and affirming each Person "by himself," to be God and Lord, yet many things relating to the important subject are laid down with great accuracy and just discrimination. Only change the word Person to the word Essential and avoid saying that each of these, by himself, is God and Lord,—and then the whole of the Athanasian Creed relating to the Trinity will be in perfect agreement with the truth. So, likewise, all that is said of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the incarnation, is in perfect agreement with the truth, provided some parts of it be understood of his Humanity in its unglorified, and others in its glorified state. This part of the Athanasian Creed even contains distinctly the statement of the analogy between the Lord's Divinity and Humanity, and the soul and body of man, which I have so much insisted on in these Lectures. It says, that "although he be God and Man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of the Manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person." Then comes the memorable and most accurate illustration: "For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." Thus the doctrine that we wish to recommend, that, in the person of the Lord, the Divinity is as the soul and the Humanity as the body, though most are struck when they hear it

as by something altogether new, is as old, at least, as the Athanasian Creed. But how the Humanity, or the Manhood, was taken into God, is a matter that may require a little further explanation, before we can see clearly, that this wonderful divine operation, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, as most may suppose would be the consequence while they do not understand what is meant by it, afforded the means of their more full manifestation and exercise. I have indeed treated of the subject, in different terms, in several of our late Lectures ; but, to meet the imputed difficulty before us, we will now consider it from a somewhat different point of view.

The difficulty that arises in most minds when they hear of the assumption of Humanity by the One God Himself, and the impression they feel as if this were the way to limit, and not to extend, the operations of Infinity and Omnipotence, arises from the supposition which we have before shown to be erroneous, that the human nature assumed was, and continued to be, merely that of ordinary human beings : for how this could actually be taken into God, and be made the medium or instrument of a more full exercise of Divine Omnipotence, would, assuredly, be a mystery indeed. Conceive, however, that Jehovah, by such assumption of Humanity, brought Himself, in a manner, into nearer contact with the world of nature, and, in fact, with all created existence ; and then there will be no difficulty in apprehending that such an adjunction, instead of tending to limit his Infinity and restrict his Omnipotence, tended, in fact, to afford the means of their more full manifestation and exercise.

But in order to make the Reasonableness of this mode of providing for man's salvation a little more apparent, let us see if we can illustrate it by a comparison or two, drawn from philosophical considerations.

It is first necessary to premise, that man can have no spiritual excellencies, but what he receives from God ; neither could he ever receive any, did not God first induce some modification on his own divine perfections, and present them in a form adapted to man's capability of reception. Man, also, is not endowed, at his creation, or birth, with a portion of the life, both spiritual and natural, necessary for his subsistence, in a detached form, se-

parated from its source, as a bottle of water taken from the ocean; but he receives his life by continual renewals from moment to moment, in the same manner as heat and light are received by the earth from the sun; which cease to abide on any part of its surface, the moment that part turns away from that luminary. Now philosophers are beginning to perceive, that no heat or light whatever could be conveyed from the sun to the earth, were not the immense space between them occupied by atmospheres, or ethereal fluids, serving as vehicles for the conveyance of heat and light from the one body to the other. Without this, the earth could experience no proof of the sun's existence; and, of course, must remain entirely unproductive. To give it, in the absence of such conductors of heat and light, any experience of the sun's existence, it must not revolve, as now, in a distant orbit, but must be brought into immediate contact with that luminary; the consequence of which would be, the earth's destruction; for, solid as it is, it would, by such an intense fire, be instantly consumed.

Now this similitude exactly applies to the nature of the communication between God and man. What the sun is to the natural, God is to the moral world. It would have been vain, —indeed, impossible,—for God to have created human minds, without the interposition of mediums for the conveyance to them of life from Himself. Supposing it possible for the frame of man to have been formed at all, it would have remained destitute both of natural and of spiritual life; since, as we have seen, these could not be infused into it as its own, independently, but could only be imparted by a continual efflux from their Divine Source. But if man were to be brought into immediate contact with the Source of life, the effect to him would be as fatal, as would be to the earth an immediate contact with the sun. Even the distant sight of the naked Divinity, were that possible without an intervening medium (which it is not,) would be too much for a created being to bear; whence Jesus Christ says in the gospel, "No man hath seen God (meaning, the unclothed Divinity) at any time." And Jehovah said to Moses, when he desired to behold him, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live."

Seeing then an immediate communication with the pure Divinity would be instantly fatal to a created being; and yet man



could not live a moment, or possess any endowments of will or understanding, without some kind of perpetual communication with his God; it follows, that God must, in some way, from the beginning of creation, have veiled over the brightness of his glory to make Himself at all apprehensible to his creatures, and even to convey to them life and being. As the light and heat of the sun cannot be conducted to the earth except by the medium of the ethereal fluids interposed between them, so neither could the love and wisdom, and thus the life, of God, be imparted in a suitably accommodated form to men, unless some spiritual medium of an appropriate nature were produced, from the Divine Being himself, for their reception and conveyance.

When, however, we thus use natural images to suggest some idea of these transcendent subjects, we must be careful not to regard the life, love and wisdom of God, and the vehicles for conveying them to man, as being things of a material nature, or the former as being communicated in exactly the same manner as the heat and light of the sun are conveyed to the earth. That they, in like manner, stand in need of mediums for their conveyance, there cannot be a shadow of doubt; but that these mediums are of a purely spiritual kind, of the nature of which we cannot form an adequate idea while we are natural beings inhabiting a material world, is most certain, and must be kept in remembrance.

This similitude, of the manner in which heat and light are conveyed from the sun to the earth, seems well adapted to illustrate the manner in which heavenly gifts are conveyed from the Sun of righteousness to the human mind; evincing that some medium or mediums must be required for the purpose. But perhaps this truth will be seen more distinctly, if we advert to another comparison, drawn from the manner in which the soul of man is enabled to produce effects in the world of nature inhabited by the body.

The soul, we know, is a spiritual substance, the native and heir of a spiritual world; in which it will dwell, in company with beings like itself, when separated from its terrestrial partner. But spiritual beings, we know, have a spiritual language, suited to the state in which they are; as is proved by the experience of

the Apostle Paul. When he was caught up into heaven, he declares that he heard things which it is not possible (as the passage is rightly translated in the margin) for man to utter : by which he instructs us, that when he was in a state like that of the angels he understood their language, but that when he returned into his natural state, he could not express what then he heard. In order, therefore, that the soul may exercise an operation, and express its sentiments in the natural world, it must be invested with the natural organs of speech and action, which are supplied to its use by the natural body. It must, in fact, be clothed over with an encompassing veil, as a medium for bringing its sentiments, feelings, and exertions, within the apprehension of other beings in a natural state of existence. So, it may easily be seen, must the Father of spirits, the Infinite and Eternal, clothe Himself in like manner with something answering to a human body, before his life, and especially his divine perfections, can be brought into a form, capable of being received, and in any degree apprehended, either by angels or men.

Let us now see how these suggestions and illustrations from reason and philosophy, agree with the views presented in the Scriptures of truth.

To suppose, as most appear to do, that the world was created by a word spoken, without the intervention of any medium between the Deity Himself and the objects of his creation, is to form a vague idea, which, if looked into, will be found to imply a contradiction. Most true it is, as the Psalmist declares, that "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth : " but to suppose the meaning of this to be, that they were all spoken into being by a mere command, is to attach a meaning to the passage which may satisfy those who can accept a poetical hyperbole for a reason, but which they who look for an efficient cause, will see is impossible to be the sense intended. The word of the Lord which made the heavens is a Divine Truth proceeding as a spiritual emanation from Him. That it does not signify a mere word spoken, is evident from the manner in which the same thing is stated in the beginning of John : "In the beginning was the

Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—By him were all things made, and without him was not anything made that was made.” This evidently implies,—especially when the subsequent verses are included,—that the Word by which were made the heavens and all things, was not a mere speech or command, which was ended as soon as uttered, but was a substantial (not material) emanation from the inmost of Deity, conveying divine things into a sphere below their Origin, and thus producing the wonders of creation, and imparting life, both natural and spiritual, to the things created ; according to what is said in the same passage of John ; “ In him was life, and the life was the light of men.” Thus this emanating life was, in a manner, to the Divine Essence, what the body of a man is to his soul,—the medium by which the soul makes itself apprehensible, and produces effects, in a sphere below that in which itself is stationed.

It is proper, however, here to note, to prevent misapprehension, that what is called in Scripture the Word, and also the Truth, is not truth by itself, as the mere term might lead us to conclude, but is truth in most intimate union with goodness ; in the same manner as the rays of the sun, though striking us more perceptibly as light, are not light by itself, but light in combination with heat. In the Divine Essence itself, as we have seen in former Lectures, is Love united with Wisdom ; and in the sphere which emanates thence, the same principles exist in similar union, but in a lower order. That combination of love and wisdom which exists in the Divine Essence itself, and that which proceeds from it, are also similarly united, the whole together forming a perfect One ; and when they are considered in this manner, that which is *in* the Divine Essence, though consisting both of love and wisdom, is simply called good ; and that which proceeds from it, though consisting, again, of both, is simply called truth. Before then any creation could have existed, the divine love and wisdom, as a united One, subsisting *in* the Divine Essence, must have encompassed itself with the divine love and wisdom, also as a united One, emanating from it ; and this, not being a creation, but an outbirth, as light and heat are outbirths from the sun, again composed with the former a One ; as the body,

though existing in a lower sphere, constitutes a One with the soul. The former I apprehend, is what is meant by "the Lord" and by "God," and the latter by "the Word," in the celebrated passages already quoted: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made:"—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And on this account, Jesus Christ, who was "the Word made flesh," says, "I proceeded forth, and came from God."

And here it may be useful to observe, that what is thus denominated the Word, which I understand to be the Divine Love and Wisdom combined as a One, proceeding forth out of, and then encompassing and as it were embodying, the Divine Essence, as a substantial but not a material emanation from it, is doubtless the Divine Principle which the adherents of the Tri-personal System mistakenly denominate the Son of God born from eternity. That this name for it is improper, was shown in our last Lecture, in which it was demonstrated, that the Scripture never uses the phrase, "Son of God," but in relation to the Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ born in time. It is, doubtless, from the intimations given in Scripture respecting this Divine Principle, not, we have seen, as a separately existing Son, but as a proceeding emanation, the theologians have formed their notion and invented the phrase, of "the Son of God born from eternity." But the misfortune is that they consider it as a person subsisting distinctly from the person of the Father; whereas it should be regarded, not as a distinct person, but as the immediate outward investiture of the Divine Essence, constituting therewith but one Divine Person, as the body of man, which is the outward investiture of his soul, constitutes with it but one human person. I mention this as supplementary to what I said on the Son of God from eternity in our last; and also to show, how the doctrine of the True Christian Religion both corrects and explains the views commonly entertained, preserves what in them is true, deprives them only of what is inconsistent therewith, corrects the improper terms in which they are expressed, and brings to light the truths, in the misapprehension or perversion of which their errors are founded.

Now, though it is highly reasonable to suppose, that, in his

primitive condition, man received the divine love and wisdom emanating from the Lord in a high degree of purity; yet, even then, it must have been impossible for him to receive them such as they are in the Lord himself. To do so, would be to come into contact with the very Divine Essence; and this, as we have seen, would immediately destroy, by complete absorption any created being. Before then man, even in his state of integrity, could be a subject of distinctly conscious life, it must have been conveyed through some medium or mediums to adapt it to his state of reception. What veilings over, the emanations of divine love and wisdom must undergo, before any created being could exist in them and be recreated by them, it is impossible for any finite intelligence to affirm;—just as it is impossible to say how near any planet can exist to the sun, so as to be capable of supporting animal and vegetable life. The nearest is many millions of miles off: and though there is not distance of this kind, & anything of space, between the mind of man and God, yet, doubtless, something answering to such distance must exist, in the difference between the divine influences, as man is able to receive them, and the source of those influences in God Himself.

It is however certain, that man, in his state of integrity, received the life, love, and wisdom of God, in the first degree in which they become accommodated to the state of any finite being. And it is equally certain, that when man removed himself to a lower sphere, in consequence of what is called the fall,—that is, in consequence of having begun to lean toward self instead of looking entirely to the Lord, he could no longer receive the inflowing life from the Lord in the form in which it had previously been enjoyed.

What then results from these, I think it may be said, indisputable truths? What but this?—that if God continued, as from his Infinite Love he must do, to will the salvation of mankind, and to provide the means to make their salvation practicable, He must follow man in his descent, by adapting the divine life, love and wisdom proceeding from Himself to the altered state of reception in the object of his tenderness. The Divine Word, then, which in the beginning was with God and

was God, by which the heavens were made, and by which all who become inhabitants of heaven must be prepared for their destination, would assume new forms and aspects suited to the altered state of those upon whom it was to operate; and thus even the Divine Being Himself would present Himself under some variety of character to the churches which were successively raised up, to keep alive some knowledge and worship of his holy name.

Here again we have views which may naturally be conceived on such a subject by Reason; and we shall again discover that similar views are authoritatively presented in the Scriptures of Truth. For we there find that the One Jehovah God actually has, at various periods in the moral history of mankind, manifested Himself under various characters, without any change in his own nature, and without any deviation from his unity and identity.

This is plain from the words which I read as a text. "God spake unto Moses and said, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." These words clearly imply, either that the name Jehovah was not assumed by the Divine Being till the revelation which he gave of Himself in the Scriptures begun to be written by Moses; or else, that a name was then resumed which had long been disused and forgotten. At that time, it is explicitly stated, He was not known by the name Jehovah; nor had He been known by that name to the patriarchs; nor, most probably, at any prior era. "Jehovah" is a word of pure Hebrew; and it is now allowed that there is no sufficient reason for concluding Hebrew to have been the language of Noah and of Adam, though this was long the popular opinion. It is true that the name occurs almost from the beginning of the Bible; but we are to remember that, although the book of Genesis records transactions of a much earlier date than the time when God thus formally announced Himself by the name of Jehovah to Moses, yet it was written afterwards by Moses himself, who, writing in Hebrew would be led to apply the name Jehovah in the same manner as in his writings which treat of the Israelitish history and laws. That such is the

fact, appears certain from what is here said respecting Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as only knowing their God by the name of God Almighty, or, as it is in the original, God Shaddai; for although it is here positively declared, that God Shaddai was the only name by which those patriarchs knew their God, yet we find the name Jehovah constantly put in their mouths by the sacred historian, whereas the name, God Shaddai, does not occur above once or twice in the whole of their history. I know the arguments by which it is commonly maintained, that although the Lord here so unequivocally declares that He was not known to Abraham and the others by his name Jehovah, they in reality knew the name, but did not know him in the character meant by it; but, surely, the mode just suggested of accounting for the earlier occurrence of the name, is far more consistent with the whole narrative. Yet if any prefer the other hypothesis, they are welcome to retain it; since this admits that the Lord had not before been known in the character *signified* by the name Jehovah; and this is as much as is required for our present argument. The text, however, positively declares, that He was not before known by the name Jehovah,—so positively, that I see not how it can be allowable to maintain the contrary. A similar change of names is equally adopted by the historian in regard to places: we often find towns mentioned by names, which it is certain, from other passages, that they did not bear till long after the date of the transactions recorded. From all this there is strong reason to conclude, that the Divine Being did not reveal Himself by his name Jehovah till the time of his discovering Himself to Moses; and it seems not improbable that the name Shaddai, the Hebrew etymology of which is so unsatisfactory, and the signification of the word itself is so uncertain, as to leave room for doubt whether it is an original Hebrew word, was the name by which the Divine Being was known, not only in the days of Abraham, but by all the descendants of Noah. By what name he was known to Adam and his immediate descendants, if by any other than the divine appellation, “God,” it would now be vain to inquire.

Now what can be the reason of this formal and expressly recorded change of name in God’s manifestation of Himself to his creatures?

None need be told, that it would be inconceivably beneath the infinite wisdom and dignity of God to assume different names on different occasions for the mere sake of variety. This may be sufficient reason for vain mortals to multiply their names; but we cannot suppose that God ever causes Himself to be called by a different name, unless in reference to a different manifestation of character, of which such name is to stand as the sign. Names were, indeed, originally given, as a reference to the Bible will evince, to perpetuate the memory of some peculiar circumstance, affecting the fortunes of the child or his parents. They were always significant: and the names given to things, even at the present day, are usually so formed, as to express the quality of the things to which they are applied. Hence the word "name," in the spiritual language of the Scriptures, always signifies the quality of the thing to which it is attached. So, the names applied to God are always appropriated to denote some particular attribute in the Divine Essence, some particular character by which the Lord has revealed Himself to his creatures. When therefore God says in our text, that He had not been known to the old patriarchs by the name of Jehovah, He expressly informs us, that He was now revealing Himself in a new relation and character to his church: and this, we have seen is admitted by those who deny the change of name. The Lord, however, affirms, that He had not been known to the progenitors of the Israelites by the designation of Jehovah. Yet He at the same time instructs us, that He is the same Divine Being who had been known to the ancients under another name, relation, and character, One God, in one Divine Person, though differently revealed to his creatures by various names, according to their respectively varying states.

This argument might be greatly strengthened by adverting to the different natures of the various dispensations of his grace, as communicated according to the varying necessities of man. It is generally believed that the intercourse of God with Adam and his descendants was by immediate revelation. There is good reason to conclude, that, with Noah and his descendants, it was by a written Word, though composed in a style very different from our Bible. With the Israelitish church it was by



the medium of prophets and of the Word of the Old Testament which they were the instruments of writing: and to the Christian church there was given the New Testament in addition, equally containing in its bosom Divine Truth itself, though written in a very different style.

Now if, at the establishment of the church among the children of Israel, God saw it necessary to reveal Himself by a new name, implying, as we have seen, a variety of character, without departing from the strictness of his unity; may it not be concluded that there was equal reason for his doing so, when the time had arrived for the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies which announced the appearing of Jesus Christ? And may we not infer also, that when Jesus appeared on earth, and declared that He and the Father are One, and that whoso hath seen Him hath seen the Father, He was in reality the same Divine Being who had revealed Himself to Moses as Jehovah and to the patriarchs as God Shaddai; who now, again, assumed a new character to adapt Himself to the urgent wants of his people, and to provide in fulness the means of their salvation? Is there, in fact, any more reason for supposing the Jesus of the New Testament to be a different Being from the Jehovah of the Old, than there was for imagining Jehovah Himself to be different from God Shaddai? It is in agreement with the whole course of the divine economy for God to assume different names, and different characters too, suited to the varying nature of the different dispensations of his truth and grace: and if the Word by which the heavens were made, was not as we have seen, a Divine Person separate from the Divine Essence, but an emanation, of the nature, comparatively, of a Divine Body, with which God encompassed Himself, to apply his aids to the necessities of his creatures before the time arrived for his actual assumption of Humanity,—is there the least reason to suppose that the Word made flesh is any more a separate Being, or can be any other than the Manifested Form of the One Divine Essence, put forth in such a manner as to meet the wants of man when sunk almost entirely into the natural state of existence, and in imminent danger of perishing altogether?

This argument goes, first, to confirm the position maintained

in our last Lecture,—that it was the One Jehovah God Himself who assumed Humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ, and that it is reasonable to believe that such was the fact: but it goes equally to establish our present design, and to evince that this taking of Manhood into God, so far from limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, afforded the means of their more full manifestation and exercise. For, as we have seen, when God makes Himself known to man by a new name, or in a new character, it is always in adaptation and accommodation to the state, and the more efficiently to meet the necessities, of mankind. He hereby evinces, that of a truth is He able to save to the uttermost,—that He can reach his creatures in every condition,—that in the Infinity of his perfections there is that which is equal to every emergency,—and that nothing can arise which is beyond the resources of his Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Power put in activity by his Infinite Love. Accordingly, we find, that as man passed through various states of declension, God followed him with new dispensations of truth and grace, and varied manifestations of his own name and nature. And finally, when the fulness of time had arrived, or when man had descended into such a state as to render all other modes of operating for his welfare ineffectual, to carry on and complete the grand scheme of Divine Mercy, “the Word was made flesh,”—the Divine Essence clothed itself with humanity such as it is with men in the world; and, having perfectly purified and glorified the humanity assumed, the Divinity united it to itself, as a medium for conveying the influences of his love and wisdom to man in a form perfectly adapted to his state. How can it be conceived possible for God so powerfully and effectually to operate upon frail and fallen man, as from Himself as a Divine Man? What medium so suitable for conveying the divine life and its saving energies to human nature, as human nature itself in perfect union with the Divinity? Is it not, then, clearly evident to reason, that the taking of the manhood into God, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and restricting the Divine Omnipotence, afforded the means of their more full manifestation and exercise? Does it limit the power of a man, when, for the sake of producing effects for which his naked person is

unadapted, he provides himself with a machine or instrument suited to the end in view? When he goes into battle, has he less ability to resist or attack the enemy, because provided with armour and weapons of proof? Does he limit his capacity for moving an unwieldy stone, on which his bare hands can produce no effect, when he adapts his hands to the operation by grasping in them a lever? What the employment of these means or instruments is to man, for the accomplishment of works for which the unassisted strength of his body is unadapted, the assumption of Humanity, for the performance of saving operations on the human soul, is to God. It is the medium of adapting the influences of his Spirit, or the outflowing life of his love and wisdom, to the state of the object—fallen man—upon whom they are to be exerted, and of clothing them with the power necessary for the purpose in view.

Let it not be objected, that to suppose the Lord to present Himself to mankind in their varying states under some variety of character, even to the actual clothing of Himself with human nature, is to regard Him as mutable. In Him, during all, there could be no real change. His essence must ever be unalterably the same. His varying his manifestations to suit Himself, in mercy, to the states of his creatures, no more implies a positive change in his nature, than the different modes of address which a prudent man assumes in transacting business with persons of opposite characters imply any change in that individual's real nature or essence. The inward motive remains the same; which is, to accomplish the end in view: and the varying aspects assumed are no changes of nature, but are only a bringing forth into actuality of certain faculties, which, though always possessed potentially, would otherwise have remained latent and undeveloped. So the different aspects, which, under different dispensations, the Lord has assumed to manifest himself to his church, even to the investing of Himself with human nature itself, are only a putting forth into actuality of certain powers and principles which were always included in the Infinity of Deity; but which could not be brought forth into open display till a fit occasion arose to require it.

Thus much may suffice to have been said on the first part of

the proposition undertaken to be elucidated in this and the next Lecture,—on the *Reasonableness* of the important truth, that the assumption of the Humanity into God, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, afforded the means of their more full manifestation and exercise. The second part of the proposition has also, in some degree, been illustrated; but in our next Lecture we will proceed more decidedly to show, *That this doctrine, so agreeable to Reason, is the actual doctrine of the Word of God*, and will adduce some Scripture-evidence by which it is conclusively established.

Most true it assuredly is, as has always been admitted by Christians, that, by coming in man's nature, the Lord accomplished a mighty work of redemption and salvation for the human race; and the true means by which He effected this, was by the divine power which, by his Humanity as the instrument, He put forth for the purpose, and which could not, in any other manner, have been adequately exerted. What is necessary on our part, that we may individually be benefitted by his saving operations, is, to believe in this Saviour God, to apply to Him for those aids in our spiritual warfare which He has thus invested Himself with power to impart, and to combat against the evils of our nature, desist from them in practice, and cultivate the graces of the Christian life, in obedience to his commandments. So will the Lord's Omnipotence, adapted to our needs by his clothing Himself with Humanity, be manifested and exercised for our individual salvation, and we shall rise to adore his goodness in worlds everlasting.

## LECTURE XI.

SCRIPTURE-EVIDENCE OF THE IMPORTANT TRUTH, THAT THE ASSUMPTION OF HUMANITY INTO GOD, INSTEAD OF LIMITING THE DIVINE INFINITY AND OMNIPOTENCE, AFFORDED THE MEANS OF THEIR MORE FULL MANIFESTATION AND EXERCISE.

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ISA. XXX. 26.

*"The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."*

To have any just apprehension of the dealings of Providence with man from the first origin of the race, we must have correct ideas of the object regarded by his Maker in calling him into existence. We must rightly appreciate the motive that influenced the Divine Mind in giving birth to the creation. These subjects, therefore, have been considered in our preceding Lectures, and in one expressly ; in which we endeavoured to show, that it is a great mistake to suppose the governing impulse in the Creator to which man owes his existence, to be a regard to His own glory, it being purely a regard to His creature's happiness. Love, we have seen, of the most inconceivably ardent kind, forms the very Essence of Deity ; and as the love of human parents for their offspring, which is an affection planted in their breasts to act as a deputy (so to speak) to the love of their Creator, prompts them to render every kind office to their children, without a thought of any other return than that which they enjoy in seeing them thrive and be happy ; so the love of the Great Parent of all cannot be of a less disinterested nature, nor differ from human parental love in kind, but only in degree. Human parental love, however, is often blind and indiscriminating ; it always desires the well-being of its objects ; but it fre-

quently takes such methods for promoting it as defeat its design. It is too apt to forget the eternal law, that happiness cannot possibly be separated from goodness; hence parents, blind and partial to the very faults of their children, too often neglect to counteract them with proper care, spoil their offspring by excessive indulgence, and are rewarded for their pains by ingratitude, and by seeing those for whose happiness they would have sacrificed their lives, plunge into wretchedness and ruin. It is but too true, also, that as children repay the kindness of their human parents with ingratitude, so many of the children of the Great Parent of all, return His kindness in the same manner; and while He is perpetually calling them to happiness and heaven, and providing means to accomplish that object, they turn a deaf ear to his calls, refuse to avail themselves of the provided means, and plunge into misery and hell. This, however, is not occasioned by any error in the guidance of the Heavenly Benefactor. He, to his infinite love, unites infinite wisdom; and what the one attribute prompts, the other finds the means suited to accomplish. But man, after all, must be left to his own freedom of choice, since to deprive him of this would be to degrade him from a man into a mere animal; whence, though divine love is continually drawing him towards heaven, and divine wisdom as constantly supplying the means by which he may ascend thither, still numbers are found who prefer the pleasures of sin for a season, and persevere in rejecting all overtures of mercy, till the day of time is ended, and eternity takes up, and fixes unalterably, the state of life acquired here.

Such being the nature of our Heavenly Father, and such the motives with which He created us, it cannot be supposed that when man forsook his primitive exalted state, God fell from his grace, as is awfully asserted in the creeds of large bodies of Christians; or took any less interest in man's well-being than before. Man could not, indeed, enjoy the presence of God so nearly; for whatever is in a state of defilement, feels more pain in the near presence of Infinite Purity, than it would in the darkest caverns of the infernal gulf. As the bodies of gross matter which compose the planets cannot bear the close presence of the sun, but find a distant station, more or less remote according

to their nature, in which they can perform in tranquillity their revolutions around him, and can enjoy such a measure of his light and heat as is best suited to their state; so do human minds find their appropriate station, in which they can enjoy comparative rest, at a greater or less distance from the immediate presence of the Sun of righteousness, according to the amount of the defiling properties which are at variance with His nature. Withdraw themselves, however, as they may, from the immediate presence of the Lord, He ceases not to extend to them his influences, and to provide the means for their return. Although the comet, in its aphelion, buries itself, as it were, in the remotest regions of space, removing to a distance from the sun greater than we can attach an idea to, it never can go out of the reach of his influence. This follows it in all its eagerness to escape from his presence; and when the proper time arrives, he draws it back, and again places it the full intensity of his beams. Such is the action of the Lord's spirit upon man, viewed in the aggregate, as existing from the commencement of creation to the remotest ages of futurity. He began his career in a state near to his Maker. From thence he departed at the fall, and by degrees receded to the greatest distance possible, without the loss of the capacity of returning altogether, from the Source of heavenly life. The influences of this Origin of good, never, however, forsook him. The Lord still furnished him with the means of salvation, imparting new dispensations of his truth and grace as man corrupted the preceding ones, and manifesting Himself under new names and characters, as was shown in our last, in adaptation to man's varying states. At length, in the assumption of Humanity, and of the name of Jesus Christ, Infinite Love and Wisdom provided means for the complete return of the wanderer. And Prophecy assures us, that a church and dispensation shall finally be raised up, in which man shall fully be brought back, and be re-established, without such danger of his wandering again, in all the perfection, and possibly in greater, than that which he enjoyed at his first creation. Such is, has been, and will be, the state of man in the aggregate, as existing on this globe. Similar divine energies are exerted for the preservation and salvation of every individual. But here, as already hinted, failures will una-

voidably take place, because if man did not receive the divine mercies offered to him in freedom, he could not receive anything of a spiritual nature at all.

The grand means by which this blessed consummation is to be accomplished, is, we have seen, the assumption of Humanity by Jehovah in the person of Jesus Christ. But as the idea that it was the One Infinite God Himself who assumed Humanity for the purpose of redeeming and saving mankind, is by some found difficult of reception, and it has been objected, that for the Supreme God to invest Himself with human nature would limit his infinity and cripple the energies of his almighty power, we grappled with this imagined difficulty in our last Lecture, in which we undertook to show, both from Reason and from Scripture, that the assumption of Humanity into God, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, afforded the means of their more full manifestation and exercise. In proof of this truth, I then advanced, and have now corroborated, what, I trust, must be considered as very strong evidences from reason, with some important testimony from Scripture; and I then stated that I would more fully take up the argument from Scripture in the present Lecture, and would more decidedly show, *That this doctrine then ascertained to be so agreeable to reason, is the actual doctrine of the Word of God*, and would adduce some Scripture evidence by which it is conclusively established. This pledge, then, we are now to redeem.

The doctrine to be established, be it remembered, is, *That the uniting of Divinity with Humanity,—or the taking of the Manhood into God, (as the Athanasian Creed expresses it,)—in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, afforded the means of the fuller manifestation and exercise of those attributes.*

If then we admit the evidence of Scripture upon the point, nothing can be more indisputable than that such was the fact. In particular, we are there explicitly taught, that the capacities of man for understanding divine things, and for receiving heavenly graces, were greatly improved by the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ;—that is, by Jehovah's assumption of Humanity in his Person; or, what amounts to the same, that thereby a light and



power were afforded, capable of enlightening and influencing the human mind far more efficaciously than could ever be accomplished before. How could such a result be produced, but because, by the union of Divinity with Humanity thus effected, the energies of the Divine Omnipotence in acting upon human minds, instead of being limited or weakened, derived the means of a more extended exercise? Full and decided is the sublime statement on this subject delivered in the prophetic words which I have selected as a text for this Lecture; which declare, that "in the day when Jehovah bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound,"—which can mean nothing else, but when he shall have accomplished the work of redemption, which all admit was performed by Jesus Christ in his Humanity,—then "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days" combined in one:—which can be nothing else but a description, in fine symbolic figures, of the great increase of light and grace, which, on that occasion, thus in consequence of the Lord's assuming Humanity, should be imparted to mankind. This is the prophecy (and there are many other to the same effect): Has it ever been accomplished?

In the gospel we continually find the Lord Jesus Christ calling man to himself, as the Author of light and life to those who receive Him:—and we are always to recollect, that the Lord Jesus Christ is "the Word," which, it is said, "in the beginning was with God, and which was God, and by which all things were made," so that "without it was not anything made which was made,"—that He is this "Word made flesh;" so that in whatever He says of Himself, He refers to Himself in this capacity—as God Incarnate, or clothed with Humanity. Of Him before the incarnation it is said, that "in him was life, and the life was the light of men;" indicating, that all the life and light which men had at any period enjoyed came from Him only: and of Him when clothed with humanity it is declared, that "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." So, He says of Himself, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Again: "As long as I am in the world, I am

the light of the world." "Again: I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness, but have the light of life." And it is the refusing to accept the light thus offered that is stated to be the cause of man's condemnation: "This is the condemnation: that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

From these testimonies it is perfectly evident, that when the Divinity was clothed with Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, it thereby invested itself with a power of illuminating the human mind in a manner that did not before exist: the reason was, because the light of Divine Truth was thus adapted to the state in which man, stood, now that he had fallen so low as no longer to be capable of clearly discerning divine things by the illumination that proceeded from the unclothed Deity; from which cause, also, divine things were previously veiled in types and figures, the meaning of which, likewise, had long ceased to be understood. It is on account of his having thus adapted the light of his Divine Truth to the low state into which man had descended, that Jesus Christ expressly says, that He is *the light of the world*. The *world*, in Scripture language, means the inhabitants of the world, as to that part of their constitution which belongs more particularly to the world: thus it means what, in the language of theology, is called the *external man*, as distinguished from the *internal man*. The illumination which existed before the Lord's clothing himself with Humanity was such as affected the internal man only, and not the external: wherefore when man had sunk entirely into his external man, he lost the capacity of understanding spiritual things altogether. But by assuming Humanity in the world, thus all that belongs to a man in the world, and by perfectly assimilating and uniting this to the Essential Divinity, the Lord invested himself with the power of enlightening the external man immediately from himself, as well as the internal: and this is the reason why he emphatically calls himself "the Light of the world."

But the blessed effects to man of the Lord's investing himself with Humanity, and man's improved state in consequence, were not confined to the capacity thus afforded him of under-

standing divine things, or of receiving divine light. A power was likewise imparted to him of receiving spiritual life in a proportionate degree ; and thus, while he was enabled to see divine things, and to understand clearly the terms of his acceptance with God, he was empowered also to comply with those terms, and so to rise from the death of sin to a life of righteousness. This, also, is evident from many declarations of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is this which He refers to when He says so often, that He is "the Life:" "I am the way, the truth, and *the Life*:" "I am the Resurrection and *the Life*:" "I am come that they might have *life*, and that they might have it more abundantly:" "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have *life*:" with other sayings to the same effect. *Life*, evidently, is something more than *light*: and by these declarations the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the Word made flesh," or God clothed with Humanity, assures us, that man from Him derives spiritual life as well as spiritual illumination: and spiritual life can be nothing but such a state of the affections, as establishes in them such objects of attachment and motive to action as originate with the Lord,—thus, the life of pure love and charity. Hence it appears, that, in this respect also, man derives incalculable benefits from the assumption by Jehovah of his nature. Hereby he is recreated with *life*, as well as light, from the Sun of righteousness,—that sun which Malachi predicts should arise on the world, and which Jesus Christ evinced Himself to be, when, on being transfigured before his disciples, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light;" by which appearances were exhibited in representative forms, the ardour of divine light and love, and the splendour of divine truth and wisdom, which flow to animate and irradiate the heart and mind of man from the glorified or Divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and which proceed thence with such accumulated energy, by reason that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily therein, and is so modified thereby, as to be rendered more apprehensible to the faculties of man.

But abundant more proof is at hand, to evince, that, paradoxical as it may appear to some, by clothing Himself with Human Nature, the Lord really assumed, in a manner, a new power

of affecting the mind and heart of man. It is indeed true that no change can take place in the Divine Essence; but, as remarked in our last Lecture, a change may take place in the mode of God's manifesting Himself to his creatures: and we may be certain, if he is truly possessed of infinite wisdom, that, as the state of man changed, God would vary his mode of manifesting Himself to him and of dealing with him; thus exhibiting himself under fresh aspects, and displaying fresh powers, which, though always inherent in the Divine Nature, could not be brought into exercise till the necessary occasion arose for putting them forth. That the Eternal Jehovah really did thus assume the means of exerting a new power of enlightening the human mind and moving the human heart, when He clothed Himself with Human Nature; but that this did not take effect till the Human Nature thus assumed was fully glorified, and perfectly united, so as to become an indissoluble One, with the Divine Essence; which was not till after the Lord's resurrection and ascension:—these are facts which are evident from the change which He then immediately wrought in the minds and understandings of his disciples. Whilst He was engaged in his ministry, as it is termed, on earth, He taught them, by oral instruction, many things of a spiritual nature, and opened many of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but He often complained of the hardness of their hearts, and want of understanding, which all his instructions were unable to remove: but which totally disappeared when He had departed from the world into heaven.

A more decided example of the obtuseness of the disciples' apprehension under the Lord's oral instructions, cannot be required, than is afforded by the well known fact, that although He taught them repeatedly that his kingdom was not of this world, and predicted his death and resurrection, they remained, all the time He was personally with them, in the common persuasion of the Jews respecting the kingdom of the Messiah, believing that it was to be established with much worldly pomp and splendour. Some of them even went so far as to desire, that when he was established in his kingdom, he would bestow on them the two chief dignities, and allow them to sit, the one on his

right hand and the other at his left. Indeed, it is perfectly clear that their belief respecting the nature of his kingdom, was precisely the same as that of the Jews in general respecting the nature of the kingdom of the Messiah ; the only difference being, that they believed Jesus to be the Messiah, which the Jews in general did not. Accordingly, as his death put an end to such expectations as these, it threw them, notwithstanding He had foretold it, into the greatest despair ; insomuch that, when they heard the news of his resurrection, they could not believe it, though He had foretold that also. That, nevertheless, with the exception of Judas, they were sincere men, willing, when they at last did understand the design of the Lord's coming, to exchange their expected corruptible crowns for incorruptible, was fully proved by the event. How is it, then, that they could not be brought to an understanding of the object of the Lord's appearing, and to this willingness to be satisfied with being the subjects of a kingdom not of this world, while He abode on earth with them ? Evidently, because until the Lord's entire glorification, completed after his resurrection, a divine influence of light and life, strong enough to effect this change in the perceptions of their understandings and the desires of their hearts, could not be imparted ; whereas it was afforded in abundance after those events had taken place. This also is expressly declared, in a passage slightly adverted to in a former Lecture. In the same manner that Jesus had said that he was the light of the world, He "stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me (as the Scripture hath said,) out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Water is in Scripture a constant emblem of divine truth and knowledge ; and this Jesus here declares should be received in such abundance from Him. But when ? The sacred record informs us, *after he was glorified* ; for it immediately adds, "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive : for the Holy Ghost (or Spirit—for it is the same word in the original) was not yet (given—our translators have thought proper to put in, but there is no such word in the original, and the sense does not require it ;—the Holy Spirit was not yet,) *because that Jesus was not yet glorified.*" From this passage we decidedly learn, that the Holy Ghost or

Holy Spirit of the New Testament is an enlightening and quickening efficacy proceeding from the Glorified Person of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it differs from the Spirit of God, or Spirit of holiness, spoken of in the Old Testament, just as Jehovah clothed with Humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ differs from Jehovah before the incarnation. It is a new power of operating savingly upon the souls of men consequent upon this glorious condescension of Deity, in investing Himself with a medium capable of conveying his influences to the human mind in a form adapted to affect it.

The same is meant when Jesus Christ says, on another occasion, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go away I will send him unto you." Here "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you," means, that if Jesus were to remain in an unglorified state on earth, the divine operative and enlightening energy, called the Comforter and the Holy Spirit, could not be imparted: but that this would be given from Jesus Christ, in his state of glorification, or would proceed from his Glorified Person, is meant by his saying, "If I go away, I will send him unto you."

Jesus in like manner distinguishes between the efficacy of his verbal teaching and that of his teaching by his Spirit, giving the preference to the latter, by saying, "These things have I said unto you being yet with you: but the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father in my name will send unto you, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Thus, what they learned of Jesus by verbal instruction they were apt to forget; but the Spirit—to be given after Jesus was glorified,—was to bring all to their remembrance, enlightening their minds at the same time as to its meaning.

Plainly indeed then is it, we find, declared, that an extraordinary efficacy of enlightening the human mind and affecting the human heart should be poured out upon mankind in consequence of the Lord's taking upon him Human Nature, when the work thus commenced was completed, and the Humanity assumed was exalted to perfect union or Oneness with the Divine

*Essence* ; and it is as plainly declared that it could not be imparted before. Did the event correspond with the promise and prediction ? This also is abundantly evident. When Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, as related in Luke, it is said, that "then opened he their understandings, that they should understand the Scriptures : " which, no doubt, refers to the same divine operation on their minds as is described on the same occasion by figurative language in John, who says, " Then breathed he on his disciples, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost ; which act of breathing is an evident representative symbol of the communicating to them of an enlightening and quickening spirit.

But the fullest description of the new spirit of light and life which was imparted to those who were willing and prepared to receive it, in consequence of the Lord's assuming and glorifying the Human Nature, is given in symbolic language, and as represented by actual symbols, in the account of what took place on the day of Pentecost, ten days after the Lord's ascension, in Acts ii. We are there informed, that the disciples " were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind ; and it filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire : and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

The first thing remarkable in the circumstances mentioned, is, the very appropriate state of preparation for the reception of divine influences in which the Apostles were when they received the divine vouchsafement. " They were all with one accord in one place !"—a most happy emblem of the unity, resulting from mutual love towards each other grounded in the supreme love they all bore to their risen Lord, and in that readiness with which they were all prepared to devote themselves, in perfect self-annihilation, to the performance of his will, in converting a world to his service. Then " suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." When Ezekiel saw his vision of the glory of the Lord, he also states it to have been attended with the noise of a rushing ; this sound being a striking representative

of the descent, with power, of the divine influences. The wind, also is frequently mentioned to denote the influences of the Holy Spirit; as when the Lord says in John: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Then "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and one sat upon each of them:" by which was represented the power of teaching the pure doctrine of Divine Truth, or of the Holy Word, with which they were now endowed. The tongues, not being single, but cloven, indicated, that their doctrine was not the doctrine of truth alone, or of faith alone, as too many would have us believe, but the doctrine of truth in conjunction with goodness, or of faith with charity; and by their appearing to be of fire, is denoted, both that the doctrine they taught was grounded in love, and also, that they were influenced by love in preaching it. Fire is an obvious and easily recognized symbol of love and zeal. Thus, the whole implies, that they were both taught what to preach, and filled with an indefatigable zeal for the salvation of souls, which regarded no obstacles in the way of preaching it. "Then were they filled with the Holy Ghost:" which instructs us, that the Lord's Humanity being now glorified, or perfectly assimilated to, and united with, the Divine Essence, such a divine influence as was adapted to man's state of perception and reception was afforded. This, at the same time that it gave them the power of making themselves understood by persons of different languages, and thus, literally, of speaking with new tongues, gave them at the same time a corresponding spiritual capacity. For it removed the ignorance, and misapprehension of their Divine Master's instructions, which so constantly attended them while He was on earth with them, when He taught them only by his words and not by his Spirit: whereas they were now, themselves, enabled to teach, from a clear apprehension of the sacred truths contained in them, the doctrines of the gospel.

It must now, I trust I may be permitted to conclude, be admitted, if either reason or Scripture is to decide the question



that the taking of the Manhood into God, instead of limiting the Divine Omnipotence, afforded the means of its more extended exercise. We have seen, in our last Lecture, that there are convincing considerations which evince this doctrine to be reasonable in itself: and we now see that there is the most copious testimony of Scripture establishing it as a fact. As is so explicitly asserted by the evangelist John, after having affirmed that the Word was made flesh, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." *The law* here, as in many other passages of the New Testament, means the Mosaic dispensation in general, in which pure divine things were indeed contained, but were veiled over by types and figures; and the efficacy of the divine illumination given under which, was not sufficient to dissipate the obscurity in which even well disposed minds were immersed,—as, we have seen, was the case with the Lord's own disciples, even when they had the benefit of his personal teaching: but the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, are the pure good and love, the pure truth and intelligence; the power of perceiving, of being affected by, and of receiving which, was imparted by the superior enlightening and enlivening beams flowing from his Glorified Humanity. If such were the effects of the assumption of Humanity, can there be any validity in the objection, which doubts whether it was the One Supreme Jehovah Himself that took it upon Him? Could such quickening and enlightening effects on the human mind have been the result of the assumption of Humanity by any Being less or other than the Supreme Divinity? Whence but by union with the One Source of Divine Love, Wisdom, and Power, could the Humanity of Jesus Christ have derived such power as was manifested after his glorification, or the completion of that union,—even so as to possess, according to his own words, "all power in heaven and in earth?" Let us not then exclude ourselves from the capability of enjoying such blessings as are thus opened to the human race, by not acknowledging the true character of Him by whom they are dispensed unto us. Surely there is evidence enough to convince the most sceptical, that it was Jehovah himself who assumed Hu-

manity for the redemption of mankind: that by so doing he invested Himself with the means of giving more extended exercise to the operations of his omnipotent love and wisdom for man's salvation; and that in that Humanity his name is Jesus Christ; who thus is the Only God of heaven and earth.

“To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever!”

## LECTURE XII.

THE TRUE NATURE OF REDEMPTION, AS CONSISTING IN THE  
REMOVAL FROM MAN THE PREPONDERATING POWER OF HELL,  
AND HIS RESTORATION TO SPIRITUAL FREEDOM.

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LUKE i. 67—76.

*“And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began; that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;—to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham; that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him, without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life.”*

PROPOSING now to pass to a distinct class of subjects, I will again solicit attention to a few prefatory remarks.

The Lectures which have hitherto been delivered in our Lord's day evening services, with a view of explaining, upon the most important subjects, the views which we believe to be those of the True Christian Religion, have nearly all been directed to the purpose of establishing the very first truths which the Christian Religion teaches,—those which relate to the nature and person of the Divine Object of worship. According to the correctness of the apprehensions we form of the nature and person of the Divine Being we adore, will be the correctness of our conceptions in regard to all the other truths of religion: for these all look, as their centre, to the idea of God, with which

they are connected ; and according to the character of the idea of God which they assume as their centre, will be the character of all subordinate doctrines. The views that we have offered upon the nature and person of the Divine Object of worship, are such, it is acknowledged, as will be considered new by the generality of the Christian world ; consequently, the views of doctrine which we are further to proceed to offer, and which regard those sentiments respecting the divine nature and person as their centre, must be such as will, at least in great part, be deemed new also. As then I have felt it necessary to request your candid and unbiassed attention to the sentiments which I have laid before you in the preceding Lectures,—and to assure you, that, when compelled to speak of views commonly prevailing as erroneous, nothing is farther from our intention than to offer the slightest disrespect to any individual who regards those views as true ; so it is incumbent on me to repeat the same assurance, and to request the same indulgence, now that I am about to proceed to another class of subjects. I shall still therefore assume, that your coming here to listen to the doctrines which it is my happiness to have received and my privilege to advocate, is alone an indication, that you are not unwilling to hear sentiments differing from those which you may have hitherto been accustomed to regard as true, and that your minds are too liberal to admit of your taking offence, should I even be led to speak strongly of the inconsistency of the commonly prevailing sentiments. You will, I am sure, believe me when I declare, that no personal offence is intended,—that we wish, because we are so required by the doctrines we have embraced as the truth, to maintain the sincerest feelings of goodwill and respect towards the person of every human being,—and that we are influenced by no personal considerations whatever, but solely by the desire of contributing to the true welfare, the real benefit, of all our fellow-creatures.

The class of doctrines which come next in order to those that relate to the Nature and Person of the Divine Object of worship, are those which regard his wonderful operations for the salvation of mankind : and these are the doctrines of his Redemption, of his Sacrifice of Himself for the accomplishment of

this object; of our Salvation by his blood; of his Mediation; and of his Atonement. These then are the subjects to which we now propose to turn our attention.

Upon this fresh class of subjects, I beg here to offer this general observation: They all are doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures. It is most certainly true that the Lord Jesus Christ has wrought in our behalf the work of Redemption; that He effected this by the Sacrifice of Himself; that we are saved by his Blood; that He is our Mediator; and that He has accomplished for us an effectual Atonement. But it is no less true, that great mistakes are made, in regard to all these subjects, in the doctrines taught at the present day. Having proved that the Lord our God has but one person, and not three, and that his person is that of the Lord Jesus Christ; it follows that no doctrines can be true which suppose the existence in the Godhead of more than one Divine Person;—I should have said, did I not know that such expressions are deemed offensive by many,—which suppose the existence of more than one God. So far then as the commonly received doctrines proceed upon the supposition of such separate plurality in Deity,—of the existence of distinct Divine Persons, “each of whom, *by Himself*, is God and Lord,”—we are compelled, by the conviction that God is but One and that the Lord Jesus Christ is He, to pronounce them erroneous. Bear with me, my brethren,—you, I mean, who may have strongly been confirmed in the truth of the doctrines generally taught,—till I have laid before you what we believe to be the doctrines of the True Christian Religion upon these subjects. The doctrines themselves of Redemption, of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, of Salvation by his blood, of his Mediation and Atonement, I repeat, *are* contained in the Scriptures: they therefore are certainly true; and they are also perfectly agreeable, in themselves, to the conceptions of enlightened reason: but the Scriptures, I hesitate not to affirm with the utmost confidence, though with all deference to the judgment of others, afford no sanction whatever to all those statements of them which assume for their basis the existence of more Divine Persons than One: while such statements of them are in the highest degree repulsive to reason, and afford the most plausible pre-

tences of Infidelity. As now commonly presented, they were first broached, I repeat, by those who are revered, among Protestants, as the chief Reformers of the Christian Church. There are traces of some of them in the writings of Wickliffe; but they were chiefly promoted by the writings of Luther and Calvin, and their immediate disciples, Melancthon and Beza. And the immediate reason of their falling into such errors, was, because when, after a long interval of neglect, in which all traditionary knowledge of such subjects was lost or perverted, men betook themselves to the study of such ancient writings as are those of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, they approached them with few of the necessary helps, and with minds full of modern ideas.

Enough, I hope, may now have been offered, to form my apology for laying before you sentiments, which in great part will be deemed new, respecting the important and interesting class of subjects upon which we are now entering. That, which is to occupy our attention during the remainder of this Lecture, is, *The true nature of Redemption, as consisting in the removal from Man of the preponderating power of Hell, and his restoration to spiritual Freedom.*

I believe I may manage to handle this subject, at least for the present, without saying much upon the common doctrines respecting it; for, really, I have been surprised, on making investigation, to find how little of a clear and positive nature is contained in the received standards of doctrine in regard to this great point of the Christian Religion. On looking over the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion which form the standard of doctrine in the Church of England, I was quite astonished at discovering, that they make no mention whatever of Redemption from one end to the other! The only passage which can at all be thought to look towards this subject, is in the second Article, in which it is said, "That the Lord Jesus Christ truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men:" but this properly relates to the doctrines of atonement and sacrifice, and not to the doctrine of Redemption, accurately so called. Indeed, though religious persons often

speaking of the Redeemer and his Redemption, I believe they in general have few specific ideas upon this express subject, but continually confound it with other doctrines, which, though allied to it, are quite distinct from it. The doctrines with which it is commonly confounded,—those of sacrifice and atonement,—I propose to treat of in distinct Lectures; at present we will open the subject of Redemption properly so called, as forming part of the doctrines which we receive as those of the True Christian Religion.

A degree of confusion respecting the nature of Redemption exists in the minds of many from the grammatical signification of the English word, which implies a *purchasing back*, by the payment of a price: and the same grammatical meaning attaches to the terms by which it is expressed in the Greek of the New Testament. But this is not the case in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, where the words *to redeem* and *redemption* are of much more frequent occurrence. There are two words in the Old Testament which are commonly translated in the English Bible by the word *redeem*: but neither of them includes, in its grammatical signification, the idea of the payment of a price, though both are sometimes applied to subjects in which the redemption or deliverance of a thing or person was to be effected by the payment of a sum of money. Thus, when it is said of the Lord under the type of Solomon, in Psalm lxxii., that “he shall redeem the soul of the needy from deceit and violence,” the plain meaning obviously is, that he would *deliver* from deceit and violence, and no idea is included of the payment of any price. The case is the same when it is said in the cxxx. Psalm, where the other of the two words are used in the original, that the Lord “shall *redeem* Israel from all his iniquities:” to *deliver* from iniquities is clearly what is intended. The plain meaning then of redemption, as spoken of in the Old Testament, always is, *deliverance*: and it will be in vain to search there for a single passage, in which, when redemption by the Lord is spoken of, any reference is made to the payment of a price.

The very first passage where redeeming is mentioned, is in the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, by Jacob; when he says [Gen. xlviii. 16], “The angel which redeem-

ed me from all evil, bless the lads:" where by the angel which *redeemed* him from all evil, he can mean nothing else than the angel which *delivered* him from all evil. So when the Lord says to Moses [Ex. vi. 6], "Wherefore, say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord: and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will *redeem* you with a stretched out arm and with great judgments;"—and when David says, respecting the same event, in 2 Sam. vii., "What one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to *redeem* for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou *redeemedst* to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods:" most obviously, the proper force and meaning of the word to *redeem* in these passages, is, to *deliver*, or to *rescue*. Nothing, certainly, of the nature of a price was paid to Pharaoh, to the nation of the Egyptians, or to their false divinities, to obtain of them the freedom of the children of Israel: the only price paid for them was the execution of judgments upon those who held them in slavery, from whom they were redeemed or delivered by force. Take a Concordance, and refer to all the other passages in which the Lord is spoken of as *redeeming* his people, and you will find the meaning to be the same.

Precisely the same is the use of the word in the New Testament, and it is only by accident that, in the grammatical formation of the Greek word there used, as in the corresponding word in English, there happens to be involved an idea of regaining by purchase. The word therefore, as occurs in numerous cases in all languages, is used metaphorically, and the simple idea intended by it, is that of delivering or rescuing; as, we have seen, is the case with the corresponding words in Hebrew, in their grammatical construction. Thus, when Zacharias in our text says, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and *redeemed* his people;" and when Anna the prophetess [Luke ii. 38] "spake of" the child Jesus "to all them that looked for *redemption* in Jerusalem;" and when Jesus Christ says, in his prophecy respecting his second coming [Luke xxi. 28], "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads;



for your *redemption* draweth nigh :”—every one must see that the idea intended by *redemption* is that of *deliverance*. At the time of the Lord's coming in the flesh, the Jews were looking for *deliverance* from the power of the Romans: and this was the only *redemption* that was thought of even by the apostles, till their minds were enlightened after the Lord's resurrection. Thus, when he was crucified, and all hopes of such a *redemption* had vanished, we find the two disciples saying, on their way to Emmaus [Luke xxvi. 21], “ But we trusted that it had been he who should have *redeemed* Israel;”—evidently meaning, that should have *delivered* Israel from the Roman bondage. The *redemption*, also, which the Lord speaks of as to be experienced at his second coming, can, obviously, be nothing but a *deliverance* from the troubles and dangers with which his faithful people would be encompassed; for none imagine that he will then perform over again the work of redemption which he has performed already, by again living on earth and dying on the cross.

And as deliverance is the sense of redemption through the Old Testament and the Gospels, so is it also in the Epistles. When Paul says in his Epistle to Titus [ch. ii. 14] that the Lord “ gave himself for us, that he might *redeem* us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works;” it is plain that by *redeeming* us from all iniquity he means *delivering* or *rescuing* us from all iniquity,—from the power of evil or of hell.

As then the Scripture idea of redemption is that of *deliverance*, the next thing that comes to be considered is, from *what* we were delivered. We would answer,—Strictly and properly, from the preponderating power of hell:—and we would add, That thereby man was restored to a state of spiritual freedom, so as to be enabled, by accepting the gifts offered him from on high, to perform the work of repentance, and live the life of faith, charity, and obedience.

Our text affords proof of both these points. Zacharias, full of the Holy Spirit, on occasion of the birth of John the Baptist, who was to be the forerunner of the Lord, after having said, “ Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and *redeemed* his people;” adds presently, “ as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world

began ; that we should *be saved* from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us : ” and he presently adds further, “ that we, being *delivered* out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life.” Here it is expressly declared, that the Lord’s *redemption* consisted in *delivering* us from our enemies : and that the object of it was, *that we might serve him in holiness and righteousness*. There cannot be a more explicit statement both of the nature of Redemption and of its design. And what is here so plainly declared, is a concise exhibition of the genuine and important doctrine of Redemption, as truly presented every where in the Holy Word.

This view of the Scripture idea of Redemption will appear in stronger light still, if we take a more particular inspection of our text, and examine what are the ideas it most naturally conveys.

Let a person read this prophetic song of Zacharias, describing the benefits to be experienced by the advent of the Lord in the flesh, and of which the birth of his son John the Baptist was a testification and earnest ; and he will be inclined to believe, if he lay out of sight all ideas but those which the words themselves, taken in their natural sense suggest, that the redemption or deliverance which is spoken of, is the deliverance of the Jews from the tyranny of the Romans : and there can be little doubt that this was the deliverance which Zacharias himself chiefly thought of ; though a very different deliverance was in the mind of the Holy Ghost, by which he was filled, and by whose inspiration he spoke. This, it is certain, was the kind of deliverance which alone all the Jews were looking to receive from their promised Messiah, and the expectation of which was at this time general throughout all the nation. All the prophecies of the Old Testament that speak of the coming of the Lord or of the Messiah describe Him as another David, who was to deliver Israel from their oppressors, and to re-establish, with greater splendor than ever, their kingdom and supremacy. Observe the terms of the famous prophecy of Isaiah, referred to by the angel Gabriel when he announced the approaching incarnation of Jehovah to the virgin Mary ; which says, “ Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulder ; and his

name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end ; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever." According to the literal sense of these declarations, the Jews expected that this wonderful Being would literally restore the throne of David, and reign thereon for ever. They understood the prophecies in a merely carnal manner, and conceived them to speak of a merely temporal Deliverer ; consequently, as they looked for a merely temporal kingdom, they only hoped for such a redemption or deliverance as was necessary to the establishment of such a kingdom ; and that was, a deliverance from their subjection to the power of the Romans, under whom they were at that time living in bondage. For although at the period of the Lord's birth, they had nominally a king of their own—the monster of cruelty denominated Herod the Great,—yet he only reigned by sufferance of, and as tributary to, the Roman emperor Augustus : and before the time of the Lord's crucifixion, even this shadow of sovereignty was abolished, and the government was administered by the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilatus. Indeed, from the time of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, and capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, that kingdom had never been restored. The Jews had been permitted to return to their own land by Cyrus, king of Persia, after he had overthrown the Babylonian empire, and his successors had permitted the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem ; yet the Jews only occupied the country as a province of the Persian empire. Nor did the overthrow of the Persian empire by the Greeks mend their condition : it only brought them a change of masters. And though under the Maccabees, they resisted with success the attempt of the Greek kings of Syria to abolish their religion : and some of their princes, afterwards, amid the troubles of the times, yielded little more than a nominal obedience to the Syrian sovereigns ; all appearance of independence was finally crushed by the iron power of the Romans. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if, in such circumstances, the Jews pined for the restoration of their original independence, and if,

having no idea of the spiritual import of the prophecies of their Scriptures, they understood the redemption therein repeatedly foretold as to be accomplished at the coming of the Messiah, to be a deliverance from the tyranny of the nations by whom they had so long been oppressed. Accordingly, such was the sort of redemption looked for, at the time of the Lord's first advent, by the Jewish nation at large ; and not only was this the redemption expected by those who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, but even by those who received Him. During the whole of his life in the world, and even till after his ascension, the disciples expected Him to work for the nation a temporal redemption, and to set up a temporal kingdom. As already noticed, the disciples going to Emmaus, on the day of his resurrection, after relating his crucifixion, add, " But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel,"—the possibility of which redemption, they conceived, was destroyed by his death. And when they were come together at the time of his ascension, they asked him, as we read in Acts i., " Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

Such being the universal expectation of the Jews, both believers and unbelievers, respecting the nature of the redemption to be wrought, according to ancient prediction, by the Messiah, there can be little doubt that, when Zacharias in our text says, " Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people,"—and states the design of this visitation and redemption to be, " that *we*"—meaning, literally, the nation of the Jews—" that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us ;"—and when he adds, " that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear ;"—there can be little doubt, I say, that Zacharias understood himself to be speaking of the redemption or deliverance of the nation of Israel from the tyranny of the gentiles. Though the Holy Ghost, which dictated the words, referred to a redemption of a very different and spiritual nature—a redemption *not* of the Jews or Israelites solely, but of the human race at large ; there can be little doubt that Zacharias himself, when he spoke of being " saved from our enemies," and of being " delivered out of the hand of our enemies," only thought of a rescue or

deliverance of the Israelitish people from the hostile nations by whom they were held in servitude.

These facts being established, what is the inference? The Jews, we see, even the best and most enlightened of them, by the redemption which they expected on the authority of their ancient prophecies, understood no other redemption than a deliverance from their oppression by hostile nations. The prophecies themselves, also, we have seen, are generally so worded, that, to one who looks no further than the letter, no other idea than that of a deliverance from hostile nations would be presented to his mind. What then is the inference?—That the deliverance of the Jewish people from their enemies is what is truly meant by the Scripture prophecies of redemption? Certainly not. Then were the redemption of Jesus Christ a mere fable, and not He but those who crucified Him were the just interpreters of Divine prophecy. But the correct inference is, that the redemption truly wrought by Jesus Christ was a work of such a nature, that it might be most justly described under the figure of a deliverance from the power of natural enemies or of hostile nations,—that language descriptive of such a natural redemption, would be most suitable for expressing such a spiritual redemption as the redemption of Jesus Christ really was. There must be an exact parallelism or correspondence between the two kinds of deliverance, so that the terms which, in their natural sense, seem to speak of a natural redemption, may symbolically denote a spiritual redemption thus graphically delineated. If the language of Zacharias in our text, and the similar language of more ancient predictions, has any reference to the redemption of Jesus Christ at all, that redemption must be of such a nature as might justly be thus represented.

And such was truly the fact. It is a certain truth that man is connected as to his spirit, even while he lives in the world, both with heaven and with hell, both with angels and infernals, notwithstanding he has no distinct perception or consciousness of such connexion. So far as good, that is, love and charity, with truth and faith, prevail in his mind, he is in communion with heaven, and under the influence of its angelic inmates: but so far as evil, that is, the love of self and of the world, with notions

of falsity, prevail in him, he is in communion with hell, and under the influence of its diabolical inhabitants. The object of the divine providence is, that man should be kept in such equilibrium between the two, as to have free power, while he lives here, of turning to whichever he pleases : but if by any means the infernal powers are brought so near to him as to disturb this equilibrium, or to deprive him of the freedom which he thence enjoys, he cannot receive the gifts of heaven, and be prepared to become one of its inhabitants : and if they come nearer still, his spiritual life must infallibly be destroyed. Now this was the state in which man stood when the Lord came to perform the work of redemption. By his fall from his original state of integrity, and by accumulations of evil from generation to generation afterwards, the power of hell had acquired an awful preponderance ; and had it been permitted to go on, the whole human race must have perished eternally. Man had become the victim of infernal bondage, and his chains were on the point of being rivetted for ever. To rescue, redeem, or deliver him from this fate, the Lord came in his nature. He assumed Humanity to admit therein the infernal powers to assault even Himself ; and by overcoming them in these temptations, by virtue of the divine power inherent within Him, He removed them from their too great nearness to the human race, and thus restored man to equilibrium and freedom. The Humanity, therefore, in and by which the Lord overcame the infernal powers, is what Zacharias speaks of in our text as the "horn of salvation," "raised up for us in the house of his servant David ;" and the infernal powers, thus restrained from coming nearer to man than was compatible with his being able to resist them, are the "enemies" from which he came to save us. According to the expressive language of the Apostle Paul, thus was "the Son of God"—or the Divine Humanity—"manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The works of the devil are the incroachments which hell had made on human freedom—the preponderating influence which it exercised over the minds of men,—and the evil which thence reigned too exclusively in men's hearts and actions : and in the removal of this thralldom

—the destruction of these works of the devil,—consisted the redemption of Jesus Christ.

This is a very slight sketch of this grand subject, which I propose further to elucidate in another Lecture. I will only now add, that the effect of the Lord's redemption is, that we are again placed in a perfect state of liberty or freedom; or as expressed in our text, "that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, *may* serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life." Nothing can more clearly show what redemption has done for us. It has delivered us from the preponderating power of hell, so that we need not be its slaves unless we freely choose such bondage. Being thus rescued from infernal domination, we *may* serve the Lord without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. We are as much at liberty to do this, notwithstanding the depravation of *own* nature, as Adam was before the fall: for if our nature is degenerated, still we have such increased divine aids afforded us, as to preserve our freedom unimpaired. We are free, through the Lord's redemption, to serve Him if we choose: and we are perfectly free, through the same cause, to make that election. The Lord's redemption does not, alone, confer salvation—that is quite a different thing:—but it places it within our reach. We shall attain it, if, trusting in the Lord, we do the work of repentance, and live the life of faith, love, and obedience. To place us in a situation in which we may do this, is the object of the Lord's redeeming acts. If we neglect to do so, we have none but ourselves to blame for our destruction; the power of doing so, originally conferred upon us by creation, being perfectly restored by redemption. Let us then not despise the Lord's grace, and, as far as regards ourselves, make vain his great work in redeeming us. Being again placed in a free state of probation, let us choose good, and live. Being delivered out of the hand of our spiritual enemies, let us "serve the Lord," as we now may do, "without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life."

## LECTURE XIII.

THE TRUE NATURE OF REDEMPTION, AS CONSISTING IN THE REMOVAL FROM MAN OF THE PREPONDERATING POWER OF HELL, AND HIS RESTORATION TO SPIRITUAL FREEDOM, FURTHER CONSIDERED: WITH NOTICE OF THE PRICE PAID, AND TO WHOM.

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ISA. LXIII. 1—6.

*"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury; and I will bring down their strength to the earth."*

THERE is no subject which ought more deeply to interest a person who is sensible that he has an immortal soul within him, than the obtaining of satisfaction as to the means of being eternally happy. It is generally acknowledged, that after sin had once entered the world, eternal death must have been the portion of the whole human race, had not Divine Mercy provided that a Saviour should come, capable of removing the impending destruction; and that it was by virtue of the redemption



thus wrought, that those of the fallen human race who should look to Him as being able to deliver them, might obtain salvation. Knowledge respecting the Saviour was therefore communicated as soon as the necessity for his redemption arose. A promise of his coming was given immediately on the fall of man, when Jehovah declared, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head : and that the expectation of this great event might never be lost sight of, additional predictions respecting it were continually given, throughout the whole of the economy of the Old Testament period.

Seeing then the Redemption by Jesus Christ is a thing of so much moment to the eternal happiness of mankind, it becomes a matter of great importance to all who value their eternal happiness to be rightly informed respecting its true nature ; since, though the belief of it in any way is calculated to add greatly to man's tranquillity and hopes,—to make his abode here less anxious and his prospects of eternity more assured,—it is evident that an erroneous conception of its nature may tend to make his hopes from it delusive : at any rate, a right apprehension of it must tend to make his security more firm. The Jews all confidently believed that the Redeemer was to come about the time he did ; yet having lost all the true knowledge which the wiser ancients possessed respecting the nature of the redemption which he was to accomplish, they experienced no direct advantage from its accomplishment : they neither recognised the Redeemer nor accepted his Redemption. As noticed in our last, they looked only to be redeemed or rescued from the Roman yoke :—redemption from the power of hell they did not value. Despising thus the spiritual redemption which the Lord offered, they did not attain the natural one which they so passionately desired ; on the contrary, instead of being enabled to throw off the domination of the Romans, their efforts to do so ended in their ruin : their city and temple were destroyed, great part of the nation massacred, and the remainder scattered over the face of the earth as a warning to others, as we behold them at this day.

Now if the consequence to the Jews of having lost that knowledge which in better times had been possessed, of the nature of Redemption, was so fatal ; may it not be concluded

that similar mistakes respecting it may not be altogether free from danger at the present day? Hence how great the solicitude which should pervade the breast of every Christian to have a right apprehension of the nature of this foundation of the Christian hope! The Jews erred respecting both the person of the Redeemer and the nature of his Redemption: What if Christians at the present day, forgetting the more just conceptions of these subjects which prevailed in the earlier ages of Christianity, should again err in both these important points? should ascribe, like the Jews, a character to the Redeemer far below that which really belongs to him, and should conceive, like them, comparatively gross and unworthy views of the nature of his Redemption?

Now lamentable as an affirmative answer to these inquiries must be, it is a subject that too nearly concerns us to allow us to abide wilfully in the dark. The Redeemer is commonly believed to be, as it is expressed, the second person of the trinity, quite a distinct Being from the Supreme God: and in fact, though acknowledged in words to be of equal majesty, power and glory, is never viewed as such even by those who make this acknowledgment: whereas, as we have seen in our preceding Lectures, the real testimony of Scripture on the subject is, that Jehovah Himself is the Redeemer of His people; and in fact, that Jesus Christ, by whom the work was wrought, was the manifested Person of the One God Himself, only distinct from the Father as the body of man is distinct from the soul, which in union form, not two persons, but One. And with respect to Redemption, equally great errors exist, as with respect to the Redeemer; it not consisting, as usually represented, in the purchase of the redeemed from the vindictive justice (so termed) of the Father, by the payment of a price of intolerable suffering by which that justice was satisfied, but in their rescue from the power of hell, by the accomplishment, of such divine works as restrained the fury of infernal spirits, and secured the redeemed from their overwhelming influence. Redemption properly consisted in delivering man, not from the wrath of God, but from the wrath of the devil; who, as the Apostle says, goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and who would have devoured the whole human race, had not

his rage been restrained by the Lord's redeeming acts. In what manner this is to be understood will be seen in the sequel.

In our last Lecture we showed, that when Redemption is mentioned in Scripture, nothing like what is commonly conceived by it, as just slightly sketched, is intimated; or can at all be deduced from the passages where the word occurs; and upon an investigation of a fair sample of such passages, we found that the sense always attached to the term is simply that of deliverance; in the old Testament and the Gospels, deliverance from enemies and calamities, by which is spiritually meant deliverance from spiritual enemies, or the infernal powers, and from the miseries they induce on the soul; and in the Epistles, deliverance from the power of sin, and of consequence from the power of those spiritual enemies by which man is incited to sin. We have seen also, that whenever the redemption of man by God is spoken of, no direct allusion is made to the payment of a price: so inconsistent is the Scripture notion of redemption with that generally entertained, the very essence of which is made to consist, as every one knows, though not directly stated in the Articles of the Church of England, in the payment of a price, by the Son to the Father, in the shape of the satisfaction with which the Father is supposed to have regarded the Son's sufferings.

Let me however observe, in addition to what was then advanced on *this* subject, that although, in some passages, mention is made of the payment of a price; this is seldom at all connected with the mention of redemption or buying again, but simply of *buying*: and that the party who is represented as receiving the price, is not the Father, as, according to the common opinion, it ought to be, but man himself, whilst the Father together with the Son is represented as the party paying this price. Thus what is really said of a price in Scripture, instead of militating against what we have said on that subject, tends strongly to confirm it; as I will now briefly show.

The only two passages where both buying and price are expressly mentioned, are in chaps. vi. and vii. of 1 Corinthians. The first is part of an exhortation to purity of life; which the

Apostle enforces with this argument: "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Here the price is said to be paid by God, which word, according to the tripersonal scheme, is always understood to mean the Father, unless the Son be specifically mentioned; and the allusion is to the practice of the ancients respecting servants, who were seldom hired by the year as with us, but were purchased so as to become the property of their masters, either for a certain term of years, or for life. Now to whom was the price of a servant paid? If the party were previously a freeman, the price of his servitude was paid to himself: if he were before a servant, the price was paid to his former master. In the present case, the parties spoken of being the members of the church, they are considered as freeman, at their own disposal, and are regarded as having become the Lord's servants by the acceptance of His gifts. They might indeed be considered as having been previously the servants of the devil; but as his was a usurped authority, it would be monstrous to think that it can be meant that a price was paid by God to the devil for man's deliverance. His deliverance from the power of hell, we have seen before, was represented by the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt, from whence they are said to have been redeemed, not by the payment of a price to their cruel tyrants, who had no right to their servitude but the right of force, but "by a strong hand and by a stretched out arm and by great judgments." Thus Redemption consists in the liberation of man from the power of hell and placing him in a state of freedom: if he then becomes a servant of the Lord, it is by the reception of heavenly graces from Him, whereby he is bound to his service; being thus, as the Apostle says, bought with a price. Thus then it is plain from this passage, that God, the Father as well as the Son, is the party who pays the price—not of man's Redemption, since, for this, nothing in the nature of a price is represented as being given—but of man's engagement in the service of God: and that the party receiving the price is not the Father, but man himself.

The passage in the 7th chapter bears the same allusion. The Apostle is speaking of the comparative advantages, for a Chris-

tian, of being in a state of servitude or of freedom ; on which occasion he says, " Art thou called being a servant ? care not for it : but if thou mayst be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman ; likewise, also, he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant." Then he adds, " Ye are bought with a price : be not ye the servants of men ;" where the meaning of the phrase is precisely the same as before.

Now if it be inquired in what consisted the price by which we were purchased or hired into the service of the Lord, an answer is given in the 5th of the Revelation, where we read that the twenty-four elders sung a new song to the Lamb, saying, " Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof ; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Here the word in the original is the same as in the two last examples, and does not mean redeemed or repurchased, but simply purchased or bought ; and here also it is evident, though the Lamb or Jesus Christ is said to be the purchaser, that the price, which was His blood, was not paid to the Father, for it is said that they were bought, not *from* God, but *to* or *for* Him. As to the party which received the price, namely the blood, it is perfectly plain who this was from several passages in the Gospel. It may be sufficient to mention the Lord's words at the institution of the Holy Supper ; where when He had filled the cup with wine, to represent His blood, He gave it to the disciples, and said to them, " Drink ye all of it : this is my blood, that of the New Testament, shed for many." It is evident then that His blood, the price by which man is purchased, is given to man himself ; and that by drinking that blood, or receiving the price, he is purchased or hired into the service of God.

There is one passage, and one only, in which we are spoken of, as *redeemed* by the Lord's blood, which is in 1 Peter i. 18, where the word used in the original *properly* means to redeem or ransom : but here also we are not said to be redeemed thereby from the wrath of the Father, but from our " vain conversation.

On the whole then it is plain, that when either our redemption or purchase is spoken of in Scripture, no reference is made to

a price paid to the Father, but that whenever a price is mentioned or alluded to, it is always spoken of as being given to us, sometimes by the Father and sometimes by the Son; and that we are always described as being redeemed or purchased, not *of* or *from* the Father as a God of vengeance, but *to* or *for* him as a God of love.

As to the manner in which the blood of Jesus operated in our Redemption, and more especially in our purchase, after we were redeemed, into the service of God, this we shall consider in a future Lecture on that express subject: Suffice it for the present to say, that no class of Christians have a higher reverence for the blood of Jesus, or are more sensible of the necessity of its being shed to procure our salvation, than we: on the contrary, it will appear, when we come specifically to treat of it, that we exalt its virtues and efficacy far above what is generally conceived; whilst we assign such reasons for its power, as are not only capable of satisfying the man of humble piety, but the man of the most scrupulous inquisitiveness, would he but seriously attend to the subject. Not only are we convinced generally, as Peter affirms, that "there is none other name given amongst men whereby we must be saved" than that of Jesus, but also, as Paul declares, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins:" and this ordinance of God we regard, not as is generally done, as a mere arbitrary appointment, of which human reason cannot see the fitness, but as the result of an eternal law of Divine Order, as beautiful, as intelligible, and as plainly indispensable, as any of the most general and simple laws of nature.

Now, however, as promised in our last, we are to return to the subject immediately before us, in which we are to show, that Redemption properly consisted in the deliverance of man from the tyranny and dominion of the powers of darkness, or of hell. Thus Redemption is a distinct thing from Salvation, redemption being a work which was wholly performed by the Lord without any co-operation on the part of man, whereas no man is saved except with his own consent. Both Redemption and Salvation are performed for man by the Lord; but with the distinction just mentioned. Thus *all* men are redeemed, which puts them

in such a state that if they are not saved the fault is their own ; but all men are not saved, as is known to every one.

In order to understand how Redemption consisted in the deliverance of man from the power of hell, it is necessary to be known that man, as to his spiritual part, is continually in society with spirits and angels even whilst he lives in the world, though he can have no perception of the fact whilst his spirit is enveloped in a material body. It is evident from numerous instances which might be given from the Word of God, though to quote the particulars at large would carry us too far. Suffice it to say, that a great number of cases are mentioned in Scripture, in which prophets and others beheld objects in the spiritual world, and held discourse with spirits and angels, though they still remained as to their bodies in this world ; a thing which would be utterly impossible, were not the spirit of man at all times in close connexion with the spiritual world, and capable of seeing the objects which exist there, and holding preceptible communication with the inhabitants, provided the spiritual senses be opened for the purpose. Take for instance the Revelation of John. It is true that the particular scenes, spirits, and angels, which were then brought before the spiritual sight of the Apostle, were arranged by the Lord for the purpose ; yet that the whole took place in the spiritual world and not in the natural, is evident from every page of the book. It is also evident, that all that was necessary to give the Revelator a perception of the wonderful things which he saw, was, to open the senses of his spirit, laying for the time those of the body asleep ; as is clear from his declaring on the occasion, that he " was in the spirit ;" meaning, that the seat of his perceptions and sensations was transferred for the time into his spiritual part, instead of being confined, as in his ordinary state, to the body.

Now if such be the case with man as to his spiritual part—if this is at all times in communication with the spiritual world, and exposed to the influence of those who there have their abode, it is evident that the character of the spirits who thus surround him must be a thing of great importance to his spiritual welfare. Suppose then in consequence of the degenerate state into which man has sunk, and of the number

being so great of those who pass by death from the natural world into the spiritual in a wicked state, the influence of evil in that world should preponderate, over the influence of good : it is evident, further, that man will be much more liable to receive the former kind of influences from that world than the latter. Now who can say that this was not gradually becoming the case, from the time of the first fall of man to that of the Lord's coming in the flesh ? That there is a hell and that there is a heaven, the former for the reception of wicked spirits, and the latter for the reception of good, is very certain : and who can say that all wicked spirits are so confined to hell, on their first leaving the world of nature, as to be kept from the possibility of exercising a usurped influence and tyranny over the spirits of men still living on the earth ? If it were not so, what occasion for a final judgment, which many passages of Scripture lead us to expect ? If there were no evil spirits who, to some extent at least, roam at large till the time of this judgment, what can be meant when it is said that they *then* shall go into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels ? And if a final judgment is still expected, when these wandering spirits shall be confined in their eternal abodes, who can say that a similar judgment, attended in the same manner with the clearing of the spiritual world from the malignant spirits who then infested it, may not have been performed at the Lord's first advent ? The Scripture assures us that all this has been the case. We will mention one or two passages, out of many, which prove it.

We have already seen, that Scripture affords ample countenance to the idea, that man is at all times, as to his spirit, in connexion with spiritual associates : and that these associates are often of wicked order, and hold him in cruel bondage, is also abundantly testified. Not to mention again the declaration of the Apostle, that the devil is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, which alone is sufficient to prove that infernal spirits have access to the mind or spiritual part of man, it is enough to allude to the numerous cases of the demoniacs, or persons possessed with devils, mentioned in the gospel ; which evince, not only that evil spirits have access to the mind of man, but also that at that time their power was so great, as to influence



and possess, in numerous cases, the body also. It is true that it is much the fashion with those who affect superior rationality at the present day, to treat the cases of the demoniacs, not as spiritual possessions, but as natural diseases, with which the agency of spirits had nothing to do: but they were certainly attended with plain evidences of their reality, such as no ingenuity can explain away. When Jesus was not recognised by the Jews in general except as a mere man, could it be a natural disease which cried out, as the spirits are said to have done, "We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God?" Could it be a natural disease which declared itself to be a whole legion of devils, and begged, if the Lord persisted in ejecting it, to be allowed to go into a herd of swine? And could a natural disease, or anything but a multitude of evil spirits, and not one only, transfuse itself into the whole herd, so that they all should plunge themselves into the sea? In short, if Scripture is worthy of credit, nothing can be more certain than that spirits have access to the spiritual part of man, and that, at the time of the Lord's advent, they exercised such an influence over him, as threatened to destroy, not his soul only, but his body also.

This preponderance then of infernal power, we have express testimony, the Lord Jesus Christ removed by coming into the world. In John xii. we find the Lord saying, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out:" In chap. xvi. He says, "The prince of this world is judged:" and in Luke x. He declares, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Now the prince of this world has always been allowed to be a name of the Devil; and whether we suppose the devil to be one great infernal being or a name for the whole of the infernal hosts taken collectively, it amounts to the same thing as to our present inquiry. And we here have Jesus Christ expressly declaring, that this Infernal Power was then by him judged and cast out. The judgment on the infernal powers consisted in their removal from the station in which they could have an immediate communication with the spirits of men, to a state of confinement, and less direct communication,

in the infernal regions. The devil is called the prince of this world on account of the influence which evil spirits then exercised among mankind. The falling of Satan from heaven, stated to have taken place at the same time, signifies much the same thing. It is evident, whether he originally fell out of heaven or not, that he could not have got in thither again, so as to make it necessary that he should be cast out again when the Lord was in the world; wherefore heaven does not here mean heaven itself, but an upper region of the spiritual world, which to infernals would appear a heaven compared with their own proper abodes in hell. Indeed, whatever is above the world of nature may, in a general way of speaking, be called heaven.

Now if hell, at the time of which we are speaking, had raised up itself as it were to such a height, and exercised such an influence as we see it did over mankind; it is evident that, unless it had been removed from man the whole race must speedily have sunk under its power, and all have perished in death eternal. A deliverance from such a catastrophe was a deliverance indeed. Of this spiritual deliverance, the deliverances of the Israelites from Egypt and Babylon were types: wherefore, as was shown in our last, these are always spoken of in the Word of God as redemptions by Jehovah. The reason why Jehovah assumed human nature for the accomplishment of this work was, because as we have seen in former Lectures, the influence proceeding from the Divine Essence, as it existed before the incarnation, was not adapted to affect man in a natural state; of course, it was not adapted to act upon infernal spirits, whose nature is far too gross to be sensible of the refined divine sphere proceeding from the inmost of Deity. As then Jehovah assumed Humanity to invest his divine influences with a power of reaching to the extremes of nature, and thus of imparting such aids to man as his degenerate state required, so did the same means afford opportunity of bringing the sphere of his Divine Truth to bear, as it were, on the powers of darkness; the presence of which they were unable to endure, but were forced by it to flee for shelter to their own dark abodes. This was effected by successive steps as the glorification of the Lord's human nature pre-

ceeded, and was completed at the passion of the cross, which was the last contest by which He subjugated the infernal powers and completed the glorification of his Human Nature.

These operations are described in many parts of the prophecies of the Old Testament under the figure of Jehovah's combats with enemies ; of which that selected for our text is one. He that cometh from Edom, is evidently the Lord in his Humanity ; and he is said to come from Edom, not with any reference to Edom as a place, but because by Esau, and thence by Edom his country, was represented the natural or external man ; and it was only by his natural or external man that the Lord could come into conflict with infernal beings. His apparel or garments represent the divine truth of his Word ; and these are said to be dyed, as with the lees of wine or with blood, in reference, literally, to the passion of the cross, and spiritually, to the gross violence offered to the true meaning of the Sacred Word as interpreted among the Jews, the professing church of that day. His treading the wine-press refers to the conflicts he endured with the infernal powers : and he is said to trample them in anger and fury, not that there really was anger in Him, but in reference to the ardent zeal with which He combated for the salvation of mankind, which appears like anger and fury to those who resist it, whereas these passions only really exist in their own breasts. All the other particulars bear a similar reference to His work of redemption, as consisting in the subjugation of the infernal powers. Thus, when it is added that "He looked, and there was none to help, and wondered that there was none to uphold," it expresses the utter falling away of the church, which at that time was with the Israelitish nation. So long as there is any genuine truth and goodness remaining in the church, there is power in it to resist the infernal influence ; but when the church is altogether corrupted, nothing but an extraordinary exertion of power by the Lord alone can "uphold" creation, and prevent the whole race of mankind from sinking in death eternal. Such an exertion of divine power is signified by its being said, "therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me." The arm, like the hand, is often mentioned in Scripture to denote power, of which it is so proper an emblem ;

and as the power which the Lord exercises to subdue the rage of hell is exerted by his Humanity, which, as just noticed, He assumed for this purpose, therefore the Divine Humanity of the Lord is specifically meant by his arm in this passage. Mention is frequently made in the prophets of the arm of Jehovah, and by it is always meant, specifically, the organ of the Divine Omnipotence, the Humanity of Jesus Christ. By this alone can the divine influences reach, so as to affect, those who are immersed in evil: by this alone can the hosts of hell be made to feel the divine power of Jehovah.

Our text, then, is one of the passages of the Holy Word which prove that Redemption consisted in man's deliverance from the preponderating influence of hell, by the Lord's victories over, and subjugation of, the powers of darkness. It would be easy to collect, from the same source, abundant more evidence of the same great truth. That all hell fought against, and endeavored to overcome, the Lord Jesus Christ while on earth, is evident, not only from the detailed account of his temptations in the wilderness, but from his agonies in the garden, and from his saying to those who came to apprehend Him, "Now is your hour, and the power of darkness." That man's redemption was to be accomplished through the subjugation, by the Lord in the Humanity, of the powers of hell, was predicted from the moment that redemption became necessary, in the curse pronounced upon the serpent or the power of evil; when God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." That the Lord when in the world did actually accomplish the work of Redemption in this manner,—that is, by overcoming the powers of darkness and rescuing man from their grasp,—is plainly taught by the Lord's words in Luke [xi. 21, 22]: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh away his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." The strong man armed is the power of hell: the stronger than he is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Jehovah in his Humanity; and his spoils are the human race thus redeemed or delivered. The

same style of language is employed by the Psalmist, when, speaking (in the supreme sense) of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, with his Humanity, into his divine glory, after having effected the work of Redemption by the subjugation of hell, he uses the brief but expressive phrase [Ps. lxxviii. 18], "Thou hast led captivity captive."

That such was the nature of the Lord's works of Redemption, is equally taught by the Apostle Paul, when he says, speaking of Him [Col. ii. 15], that "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." It is acknowledged that by principalities and powers he means the powers of darkness or the spirits of Satan; who are thus declared to have been vanquished by the Lord, and their prey liberated, in the sight of the angelic witnesses of the conflict. The same is taught by the same Apostle when he says to the Hebrews [chap. ii. 14, 15], that Jesus took part of flesh and blood, "that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." The devil, certainly, whether considered as one infernal being or a multitude, denotes the infernal power in general; and the *deliverance* of mankind from bondage to that power, through the Lord's assuming Humanity and glorifying it, which was completed by his death on the cross, is here, plainly, only another term for their *Redemption*.

I trust then that enough has now been adduced to prove, that the Redemption of man, according to the Scripture idea of it, consisted in the removal and subjugation of the powers of darkness, and the rescuing of their captive and spoil from their grasp, by the redeeming acts of the Lord Jesus Christ. But this work would still have been incomplete had it ended here. Though mankind at that period would have been benefited, no provision would have been made for future generations. It was not only necessary to subdue the infernal hosts *once*, but that means should be provided against their again resuming their lost dominion; and this required, that Jehovah should not merely appear amongst men in human nature, but that he should unite the Humanity with his Divine Essence for ever. Thus only

could the means of salvation be for ever supplied to mankind. This union, therefore, the Divine Saviour effected at the same time; whence He rose again in his Glorified Human Form, and ascended into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of God; by which Scripture figures is described the exaltation of his Human Nature above every degree of created existence, even to perfect oneness with the Essential Divinity, so as to be the sole organ by which, thenceforth, the Divine Omnipotence should be exercised, and by which hell should be restrained in everlasting subjection. Thus are the means afforded to every one by which he may secure his eternal salvation. Be it then our care diligently to avail ourselves of the Redemption thus wrought for us, by availing ourselves of the power, communicated from this origin, of keeping the commandments of our God. It is thus only that a state and disposition of mind can be attained capable of dwelling in the angelic regions; where we shall enjoy the bliss with which an eternal abode in those regions must be attended; and where we shall glorify our God for the Redemption He has wrought, and for the salvation He hath procured for us, for ever and ever.

## LECTURE XIV.

THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST; IN WHAT IT CONSISTED; AND HOW IT IS COMPATIBLE WITH HIS ONENESS WITH THE GOD-HEAD, AND WITH THE ATTRIBUTES OF INFINITE LOVE AND WISDOM AS FORMING THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE DIVINE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

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JOHN XV. 15 (latter clause).

*"I lay down my life for the sheep."*

I TAKE it for granted, in regard to the Lectures which I have undertaken to deliver in this place on Lord's day evenings, and in which I profess to offer a view of Christian Doctrine, which steers clear of the inconsistencies inherent in the tripersonal scheme, on the one hand, and of the negations of Scripture involved in the Unitarian system on the other,—a view which, in our opinion, makes Revelation harmonize with the purest views of Reason, and leads genuine Reason to adore the glories of Revelation: I take it for granted, I say, that those of the public at large who are willing to attend to Lectures delivered under these professions, will in general be persons of liberal and candid minds,—such as do not feel too entirely confident that all of divine truth which ever can be known is contained in the doctrines commonly maintained as those of Christianity; and that, while all subjects of human knowledge are continually receiving great improvements, theology is ever to remain exactly where it was placed by Luther and Calvin. Taking it for granted that I have persons of such liberal minds before me,—persons who will not take offence at hearing sentiments of religious doctrine differing from what they have been accustomed to,—I have offered views, respecting the Essential Nature of Deity, the Divine Unity and Trinity, the Glorification, or Deification, if

you will, of the Humanity of Jesus Christ, so as to become the organ of the exercise of the Divine Omnipotence ; and lastly, respecting the nature of the Lord's work of redemption ; which, as differing greatly from the doctrines generally entertained, required, I was well aware, candid minds to give them due consideration. Yet, as I have repeatedly observed, while we regard the doctrines commonly prevailing on these points as disfigured by great errors, we do not the less regard with esteem, and wish to love as brethren, those who cherish those doctrines. We are quite certain, that many who are now zealous for sentiments which we believe to be erroneous, are sincere lovers of their God and Saviour, and will be ready to accept more accurate views when brought fairly before them ; yea, that many who are now zealous against the doctrines which we recommend to their attention, will eventually come over to our side ; and, in this instance, we argue to the future from our experience of the past.

But if I have felt it necessary to appeal to the candour of my hearers in regard to the subjects of our former Lectures, still more is it necessary in regard to those which are now in the course of delivery. Many Christians are ready to think favourably of a view of Divine Truth which makes the doctrine of the Divine Trinity perfectly consonant with that of the Divine Unity, and reconciles the whole of this important subject with the perceptions of enlightened reason. But many of these, when they see the consequences,—that some of the most favourite doctrines of the present day, as commonly understood and explained, must fall to the ground, if the real Unity of the Deity, and his unmixed benevolence, be established,—become alarmed. Not able to part with sentiments which they have confirmed as necessary to their salvation,—not daring even to look fairly at any exposition of such subjects which is opposed to their previous belief,—they run back into their former darkness,—take shelter again in the plea of mystery and incomprehensibility ; and, since other doctrines, to which they are more attached, cannot be maintained without it, they again set up in his place the Dragon which had fallen on the threshold at the presence of the ark of the Lord,—the persuasion that the Godhead is divided



between three absolutely separate persons,—so separate, as to possess not only distinct but absolutely opposite natures and attributes,—the Father being a God of anger, the Son a God of love, and the Holy Ghost a God who has no distinctive attribute of his own, but is the passive instrument for executing the decisions agreed upon by the other two. Bear with me, I beseech you, my friends and brethren. I have no intention to treat any of your sentiments with disrespect. Nor will you have any reason to be dissatisfied if you will suspend your judgment till the end of these Lectures. As I stated in our last Lecture but one, the doctrines of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, of Salvation by his blood, of his Mediation and Atonement, which are the subjects we now are to proceed to consider, are really taught in the Scriptures. But, like the Doctrine of the Trinity itself, they have been greatly corrupted in the latter ages of Christianity. No trace of them, as now taught, is to be found in any Christian writer till after the time of the Council of Nice, when the great corruption of the doctrine of the Trinity was first established: and, as taught at the present day, they were not known in the Church till the era of the Reformation. Fancy not then, that, in contending for them, you are contending for the faith once (or originally) delivered to the saints. As now maintained, also, they form, still more than the doctrine of the Tripersonality itself, which they aggravate into open Tritheism, the strongest citadel in which Infidelity intrenches itself. Listen then, with candour. I beseech you, as you regard your best interests, to a view of these subjects, which divests them of all that makes them offensive to reason, and inconsistent with a just exposition of the Word of God.

I must assume as granted, and as sufficiently proved in my former Lectures, that the Essential Nature of Deity is Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom, including no attributes that are inconsistent with these: and that God is Absolutely One, both in Essence and Person,—Jesus Christ being the manifested Person of the Incomprehensible Jehovah.

The doctrine then which we are to consider this Evening, and to place in a light which involves no contradiction of those fundamental principles, is that of *the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ*:

and we are to show *in what it consisted; and thus, how it is compatible with his Oneness with the Godhead, and with the attributes of Infinite Love and Wisdom, as forming the Essential Nature of the Divine Object of worship.*

In the words of our text, and in others of his discourses, the Lord Jesus Christ explicitly informs us, that he came into the world to lay down his life for the salvation of mankind: as He says on another occasion, He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. In what manner then, be it inquired, are men benefited by the laying down of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ? In the context of the passage we have just read, the Divine Speaker declares, that he lays down his life expressly that He may take it again: May we not therefore infer, that his taking it again is as essential to the salvation of man as his laying it down? Two or three previous investigations are necessary to enable us to give satisfactory answers to these inquiries. To come to particulars, it is necessary, first, to consider, what is the true idea attached to sacrifices in the Holy Word; and, how the Lord's death is to be regarded as a sacrifice.

In our last two Lectures we endeavoured to show, by the testimony of Scripture, that Redemption properly consists in the liberation of man from the power of hell, and that the Lord's redeeming acts were the conflicts by which, while in the world, and especially at his death, He subdued the infernal hosts, so that man was no longer necessarily held a slave in their chains. This is a view of the subject that is at present too little attended to, notwithstanding the Apostle Paul, in Heb. ii. 14, 15, expressly declares, that Jesus took on Him flesh and blood "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage;" and John, with the same clearness testifies [1 Epist. iii. 8,] that "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." How great then is the error, when men regard the redemption wrought by the Lord, as consisting, not in a deliverance from the power or wrath of the devil, but from the wrath of God! Similar errors are entertained respecting the

nature of sacrifices in general, and that of Jesus Christ in particular, and of course respecting the nature of the atonement thus procured for mankind. It is commonly supposed, as has before been stated, that redemption and atonement are one and the same thing, both consisting in the sufferings which the Lord underwent on the cross, when He is conceived to have paid the whole penalty due to the sins of mankind, suffering it in their stead. By such discharge of the penalty, He is understood to have delivered his people from the Father's wrath (in which his redemption is supposed to have consisted), by satisfying the requirements of avenging justice (which is regarded as constituting his atonement). These views are conceived to be strengthened by this circumstance, that Jesus Christ is in a few places spoken of as a sacrifice for us: as when Paul says to the Ephesians [chap. v. 2], "Walk in love; as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour:" and when Jesus himself says in our text, "I lay down my life for the sheep," He is supposed to mean, as a sacrificed victim. The words are understood to imply, that He laid down his natural life in exchange for our eternal life, dying, not merely *for us*, or *for our benefit*, but *in our place*, or *instead of us*, as a victim of wrath substituted in our stead. That he did lay down his life *for us*, and that if He had not done so, we must have perished eternally, we most cordially admit; and if this were what theologians mean when they say that He died *instead* of us, we should most entirely concur in the sentiment. It is most true, as Isaiah declares, that "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his stripes we are healed." Still this was not effected, by a transfer to Him of the punishment of guilt individually due to us, according to the prevailing idea; as will, I trust, presently appear.

This bearing of the punishment due to the sins of man by the Lord on the cross, is supposed to be the thing pointed at in all the sacrifices of the Levitical law: and to ascertain the truth respecting this interpretation, it will be necessary to consider what is the true idea attached to sacrifices throughout the Holy Word.

The notion commonly entertained of a sacrifice by professors of religion at the present day, and indeed the notion which it always bears in common discourse, is that of a painful surrender of something very dear to us, to part with which is like parting with life. But how remote is this from the genuine import of the word, and from every thing that is said about it in Scripture! The word *sacrifice* etymologically signifies, as a verb, to make *sacred*, and as a noun, *a thing made sacred*. In Hebrew, the idea conveyed by one of the verbs used to denote it, is, *to slaughter for food*, and by the noun thence derived, *that which is slaughtered for food*: for the sacrifices were always considered in the light of food presented to Jehovah, or devoted to his use. Another verb employed means, *to cause to ascend*, and the noun from it, *the thing sent up*, or *presented*. But are we to make offerings to the Lord so grudgingly as to feel what we offer as a painful relinquishment? Following the common notion of sacrifice, as something parted with very reluctantly, it is often imagined, that our sins and evil propensities are what we are required to sacrifice unto God. We are to surrender them, it is true; but if, as is so evident, a sacrifice is a thing made sacred, devoted to the use and service of the Lord, and even considered as being equally agreeable to Him as food is to us, how is it possible that our sins can be thus devoted and applied? The truth then is, that all the numerous sacrifices and offerings prescribed in the Levitical code, represent the true worship of the Lord from all the various affections of a heavenly nature that can be inseminated by Him into the human heart; and the offering of them up is expressive of the heartfelt acknowledgment that all our graces are from the Lord alone; in which acknowledgment the true worship of the Lord essentially consists.

Many declarations, giving this view of the nature of sacrifices, are to be found both in the Old and New Testaments. David, in the depth of his humiliation for his crimes, when, if at any time, the mind would be disposed to fly to external sacrifices, if either in themselves, or as representing the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, they could be supposed to possess any efficacy, declares their utter uselessness in themselves. He says to the Lord [Ps. li. 16, 17], "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give

it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise:" evidently instructing us what the sacrifices of God really are, and, of course, what the Levitical sacrifices represent;—namely a state of mind which acknowledges in all humility its own unworthiness, and thus is receptive of the Lord's mercies. Accordingly, Jehovah says by Hosea [ch. vi. 6], in a passage repeatedly quoted by the Lord in the Gospel, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings:"—whence it is evident, that the divine Re-prover means to say, that outward sacrifices, separate from the dispositions of heart and mind meant to be represented by them, cannot be accepted by the Lord; and that the heavenly graces of which they are designed to be emblems, are mercy or love, with the knowledge of God or a living faith in Him. Similar is the testimony of the Apostles. Paul says to the Romans [ch. xii. 1], "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God; which is your reasonable service:"—where it is evident, that by a living sacrifice he means a pure life and conversation,—a devotedness of the whole man to the service of God. This he calls our "reasonable service," meaning by that phrase, our mental worship, as contrasted with the ceremonial or ritual service or worship of the Levitical code, and as being what this represented. So, when mentioning a present he had received from the Philippians, he calls it [chap. iv. 8] "an odour of a sweet smell, a *sacrifice* acceptable, well pleasing to God:" thus applying the term to a work of love. So again to the Hebrews [ch. xiii. 15, 16]: "By him (that is, Jesus) let us offer the *sacrifice of praise* unto God continually, that is, the *fruit of our lips*, giving thanks to his name: but to *do good*, and to *communicate*, forget not; for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased." Here, praise and doing good are described as sacrifices; evidently showing that a sacrifice is not properly a painful renunciation, or a submission to suffering, but a free-will offering of adoration and love, proceeding from heavenly affections, and manifested by beneficent deeds. How plain then is the inference, that the offerings of the Levitical code must be meant to represent such

offerings of the heart and mind,—a pure worship of the Lord, flowing from heavenly affections offered to Him as their sole Source and Author!

Now in the views which we thus attain of the true import of sacrifices, as gathered from the Holy Word itself, what countenance is afforded to those commonly entertained? The favourite opinion respecting them is, that when a person brought an animal to be sacrificed, it implied an acknowledgment that he deserved to be treated as the animal was about to be; that as the animal was to suffer death, so the offerer deserved to suffer damnation. And as he was required by the law to lay his hands upon the head of the victim, this was supposed to imply the transfer of his guilt from himself to the animal; which, therefore, was accepted in his place, to appease by its death the anger of God. As, however, it is palpably evident that the death of an animal is a trifling substitute for the eternal damnation of a human being, it is supposed, after all, that the sacrifice of the animal had nothing to do with the deliverance of the sinner, except as symbolizing the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is regarded as the great victim to whom were transferred, though innocent himself, the iniquities of the whole of the human race, or at least of such of them as are saved, and who, in his sufferings on the cross, bore all the punishment which was due to them.

It is worthy of remark by all who are desirous to learn the ground upon which favorite opinions rest, and indeed by all who wish to be well established in the truth, that the notions entertained at the present day on the nature of the sacrifices of the Levitical code, are entirely borrowed from the Jews. The most learned writers on theology used to think they had accomplished their point in establishing the vicarious nature of sacrifice, and in concluding that the death of the victim was in some way accepted in lieu of the eternal damnation of him who offered it, when they had been able to show that this is the opinion of the modern Jews upon the subject. What the views of the ancient Jews were, who lived before the Babylonian captivity, or even of those who lived prior to the era of the Lord's advent, it is not now easy to ascertain: but it is very probable that as, at the period of the Lord's coming, they had lost whatever just knowledge upon spi-

ritual subjects they once possessed, their sentiments upon the nature of sacrifices might then be the same as those of their later descendants. Now the stated confession made by Jews in modern times upon offering up a victim concludes with these words: "Let this be my expiation;" words which are capable of being understood in agreement with the truth. But the way in which they are actually understood by them is stated by Jewish writers to be this: "Let the evils or miseries which in justice should have fallen upon my head light upon the head of the victim which I now offer." A great Jewish authority,—the celebrated Rabbi Abarbanel, states the matter thus: "They burned the fat and the kidneys of the victims upon the altar, for their own inwards, these being the seat of their intentions and purposes; and the legs of the victims for their own hands and feet; and they sprinkled their blood instead of their own blood and life; confessing that in the sight of God, the just judge of things, the blood of the offerers should be shed, and their bodies burnt, for their sins,—but that through the mercy of God, expiation was made for them by the victim's being put in their place, by whose blood and life, the blood and life of the offerers were redeemed." Christian theologians quote these Jewish statements with approbation. The notion presented in them is precisely that which the divines of the present day entertain of the nature of sacrifice, with this only difference, that they conceive the sacrifice of the animal to have been merely emblematic of that of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the evils or miseries which those who offered the Mosaic sacrifices merited, were not in reality transferred to the animal victim, but to the divine one. But how wonderful does it seem that enlightened Christians (as they ought to be) should go to benighted Jews for instruction in one of the deepest mysteries of their faith, and should exhibit as the central point of gospel light a sentiment drawn from the bosom of Jewish darkness! What says the Divine Teacher respecting these blind guides!—"Ye have made the law of God of none effect through your tradition." [Matt. xv. 6.] "The law of God" includes the whole of the Mosaic ritual, and indeed the whole of the Jewish Scriptures; the true meaning of which the Divine Author of them thus declares to have been entirely extinguished among that

people. Assuredly, the primary doctrine of the Christian religion ought still less to be founded upon Jewish than upon Romish traditions, but solely upon the Word of God, viewed in the true light of the Gospel.

It is, however, certain, that both the traditions of the Jews, and the application of them by Christians, are totally unwarranted by the sacred text itself. The Scriptures themselves afford no sanction whatever to the notion, that the sins of the offerer of sacrifice were considered as transferred to the victim, and that the punishment due to the human sinner was regarded as endured in his place by the unoffending animal.

If, for instance, the sins of the offerer were considered to be transferred to the victim, it is evident that the animal, when thus symbolically loaded with guilt, must be unclean, and would, under a typical dispensation, be viewed with horror, as something profane. So, also, if its death was symbolical of the penalty of eternal damnation merited by him that offered it, it is plain that, after it was slain, it must have been regarded as representing a lost soul in hell. To eat, therefore, of such an animal, must have been a greater abomination, than to eat of swine's flesh, or any other meat prohibited as unclean. Was this the case? Exactly the contrary. It is repeatedly declared, both respecting the slain animal sacrifices and the bread offerings, that they are *most holy*. We read thus [Lev. vi. 24—27, 29] of the sin offering, which might be supposed to be the most defiled of all: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt-offering is killed, shall the sin-offering be killed before the Lord: it is *most holy*. The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. *Whoever shall touch the flesh of it shall be holy*: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled *in the holy place*.—All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: *it is most holy*." Is not this utterly irreconcilable with the notion that the sins of the offerer were symbolically transferred to it, and that the death inflicted on it was in commutation for his sinking into death eternal?



It is however true, that, on *one* occasion, the sins of the people were considered as transferred to an animal. Let us then see what light this remarkable circumstance will throw on the design of the sacrifices in general.

At the great day of expiation, as it was called, which occurred but once a year, the high priest was commanded to take two goats, and to cast lots upon them, one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scape-goat. The goat thus allotted to the Lord was to be sacrificed in the usual way; after which it was commanded, [Lev. xvi. 20, 21,] that the high priest "should bring the live goat, and should lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat." Now this exactly answers to the idea commonly entertained of the nature of sacrifices in general. This goat is typically loaded with the sins of the people. Well, then; if the common ideas are correct, he must be fitted for a more solemn sacrifice than any other of the victims offered, respecting which it is only occasionally said, that the offerer should put his hand upon their head, without a word about transferring sins to them. Here, however, the whole is done as fully as the warmest advocate for the common notions could desire. If then the death of the victim represented the punishment deserved by man for his sins, this goat, loaded with the sins of the whole congregation, must perish most certainly,—perhaps be burnt alive, to represent more exactly the torments of the lost in hell. Yet nothing of the kind took place. This goat was not sacrificed: but the sacred record immediately adds [vers. 21, 22], that the priest "shall send him away by a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." As, also, the animals that were really sacrificed had the effect of making all that touched them holy, so this goat, thus sent into the wilderness laden with sins, had the effect of making those who touched him unholy: for it was commanded [ver. 26], that "he who let go the scape-goat should wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water," before he was allowed to re-enter the camp.

Is it possible to desire any plainer evidence to instruct us in the real design of the Levitical sacrifices? Can the animals which were actually slain, and which not only procured blessings for him who offered them, but had also a sanctifying influence upon all who touched them, possibly signify anything else than what we have already seen the inspired prophets and apostles regarded as constituting the only real sacrifices,—the pious breathings of a heart filled with pure heavenly affections, worshipping under their influence its adored Lord, elevating to Him the heavenly graces which come from Him, in the devout acknowledgment that He is the Author of them, and of everything that is good? And can the animal which was representatively loaded with the sins of the people, and sent into the wilderness, denote anything else than the rejection of all the evils, with which the devout penitent feels himself oppressed, to the infernal abodes from whence they come; in the acknowledgment, that his selfish nature is near akin to hell,—that, as to himself alone, hell is his proper home; but who, by this acknowledgment, and the cultivation of the opposite good of which the sacrificed goat was the emblem, is separated from hell, whilst his evils are separated from him; and he worships the Lord from the good received in their place?.

It being then so clear that the sacrificial worship of the Jews represented the worship of the Lord with the purified affections of a renewed heart and mind, we are now prepared to form right conceptions of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to discern in what it consisted.

There are in the whole no more than five passages in the whole Bible in which the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is termed a sacrifice; and these all occur in the Epistles of Paul. The first is in that to the Ephesians [ch. v. 2], where he says, "Walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a *sacrifice* unto God, for a sweet smelling savour." To the Corinthians the Apostle writes [1 Ep. v. 7], "Christ our passover is *sacrificed* for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." To the Hebrews he says [ch. vii. 27], that Jesus

“needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up *sacrifice*, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s ; for this he did once, when he *offered up himself*.” Again, to the same [ch. ix: 24—26]. “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us : Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year, with the blood of others (for then must he have often suffered from the foundation of the world) : but now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the *sacrifice* of himself.” He again says of Jesus in the following chapter [x. 12], that he, “after he had offered once *sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.” These are the only passages in which the Lord’s death is expressly termed a sacrifice : and three out of the five occur in the Epistle to the Hebrews alone, because the Hebrews or Jews were so much possessed with the notion of the necessity of retaining the sacrifices of their law. It is evident, indeed, that in most of these texts, whether the Epistles in which they occur were expressly addressed to Jews or not, the object of the Apostle is to adapt his instructions to the preconceived notions of the Jews, withdrawing them from their persuasion of the sufficiency and necessity of the Levitical sacrifices, and disposing them to relinquish their attachment to these by offering them something apparently similar, but much superior, in their place. In all the first congregations there were converts and teachers who were Jews and Jewish proselytes : all the Gentiles, likewise, of those days, were in the habit of using animal sacrifices. It was therefore important to wean them from these, by showing them that all which those sacrifices represented was pre-eminently fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ. All that he says upon the subject, though accommodated to Jewish notions, is consistent with genuine truth ; only, to understand it in its true meaning, it is necessary to have a correct idea of the nature and signification of sacrifice in general ; for upon this must necessarily depend the notion we form of the nature of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Now we have seen that, in regard to man, sacrifices represented a pure worship of the Lord, flowing from

heavenly affections, the various kinds of which were denoted by the various animals that were sacrificed, and offered to Him as their only Source and Author. Thus we have seen that we are exhorted by the Apostle Paul to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God," as our "reasonable service"—the spiritual worship of the heart and mind, so called in contrast to the material and carnal worship of the slaughtered animals. We are to present our "bodies" as such a "living sacrifice;" which can mean nothing less than that the whole man is to be devoted to the service of the Lord. We are hereby instructed, that whoever does in this manner, mentally and spiritually, what was *represented* in the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, actually becomes a sacrifice himself, in the proper meaning of the word,—a thing made sacred to the Lord.

If, then, every man who becomes truly regenerate is sacrificed to God according to the genuine meaning of the term, we see how truly it may be said that the Lord Jesus Christ is a sacrifice. It had become necessary, in order to the salvation of man, after he had declined from the order of his creation and sunk into the low natural state in which we now behold him, that, as was shown in a former Lecture, Jehovah should accommodate the influences which perpetually proceed from him as light proceeds from the sun, to the state into which man had descended. This, we have seen, he did, by assuming the human nature, by submitting to be born into the world. As however the instrumentality of a human mother was necessary to this purpose, the human form in which he appeared on earth unavoidably partook of her infirmities. The soul of this body, or its inmost principle of life, was no other than Jehovah himself: for we read in the angel's salutation to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." It is plain then that Jehovah, or the Most High was himself the Father of the Holy thing, or Humanity, thus produced; and as the Divine Essence is incapable of being divided, it follows, that the whole Divine Essence dwelt in it, as the soul dwells in its body. Still the body, as being born of an imperfect and sinful creature, partook of her

imperfections. It was, indeed, at first, of a nature altogether similar to that of ordinary men, with the exception, that, by virtue of being animated by such a soul, it advanced to maturity much more quickly and perfectly. So long then as the human form thus assumed partook at all of what it inherited from the mother, it only received the communications of the Divine Essence within with more or less of limitation : in order to its receiving the whole fulness of the Godhead, of which the Apostle Paul declares [Col. ii. 9,] the body of Jesus Christ to be the residence, and thus becoming properly the Divine Form of the Divine Essence, it was necessary that it should be entirely renewed, by the continual bringing down of divine principles from within, and the successive extirpation of all that was merely human, imperfect, and finite, to make way for them. This process of *putting off*, was completed at the passion of the cross, and the accompanying process of *putting on*, at his resurrection and ascension : as was shown in our Lecture on *the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Divine Nature of his Resurrection-Body*. Accordingly, He said to the disciples, who viewed his crucifixion as the extinction of their hopes in Him as their Redeemer, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory" [Luke xxiv. 26] : where by "suffering these things," He means, the painful process of putting off the frail humanity taken from the merely human mother ; and by "entering into his glory," He means, the fully investing Himself with a Divine Humanity wholly taken from the Divine Father, and returning, with his Humanity thus completely glorified, into the glory which He had with the Father, as the Divine Truth in union with the Divine Good, "before the world was" [John xvii. 5],—before created beings existed ; thus, before it was necessary to accommodate the influences of his Spirit, or his outflowing life, so as to adapt them savingly to affect debased and fallen creatures. This could not be done, but by assuming and glorifying the Human Nature ; wherefore we are told, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" [John vii. 39]. But when the Humanity was not only assumed, but glorified, such aids of the Holy Spirit were

given. This is what Paul means, when he says that Jesus "now ever liveth to make intercession for us" [Heb. vii. 25]; where by *interceding* he does not mean *soliciting*, or *intreating*, in the gross external idea, but *acting as a medium*, or as what *goes between*, which is the strict meaning of the word *to entercede*. This is the proper office of the Divine Humanity; which, as it were, receives into itself the unmitigated fulness and fire of the Divine Essence, and dispenses its influences to man in a form and measure adapted to his state: just as a man's body receives into itself the whole of the powers of his soul, and dispenses its energies, in the manner adapted to make them efficient to the purposes intended, on the persons and things around it.

I shall say some more on these subjects in another Lecture. But even from the slight sketch now offered, we perhaps may be enabled to form some just idea of the nature of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to discern in what it consisted: and according to this truly Scriptural view of the important subject, we see that it is perfectly compatible with the strict Oneness of the Godhead, and with the attributes of infinite Love and Wisdom, as constituting the essential nature of the Divine Object of worship. All is harmonious, when it is seen that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ consisted in offering himself up to the Father, or Divine Essence, so as no longer to retain any human infirmity, but to be wholly filled with the Godhead, becoming capable of receiving it in all its infinite fulness. Let us be anxious to profit by the Lord's goodness herein, in the manner designed by Him. We learn from what has been offered, that Jesus Christ became a sacrifice *for* us, but not *instead of* us; not to dispense with the necessity for our offering such spiritual sacrifices as were represented by the ceremonial ones of the Levitical law, but to enable us to perform them. By his "going up on high," as expressed by the Psalmist,—that is, by the exaltation of his Humanity to union with the Divinity, which was making it a sacrifice, he "received gifts for men;" that is, became the Dispenser of divine graces in a form adapted to man's recep-

tion. Let us then be careful to prepare our hearts for their reception, and to look to him for their communication. Let us never forget the express purpose for which the Lord became a sacrifice; "who," as the Apostle Paul declares [Titus ii. 14], "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

## LECTURE XV.

FURTHER PARTICULARS RELATING TO THE LEVITICAL SACRIFICES, EVINCING THAT THEY DID NOT REPRESENT THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST AS THIS IS COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD, BUT THAT THEY DID REPRESENT IT ACCORDING TO ITS TRUE NATURE; WHICH THEY GREATLY ILLUSTRATE.

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Psalm l. 7—15.

*"Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat out of thy folds; for every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild-beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."*

IN our last Lecture we treated of the doctrine of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; and considered several particulars tending to show in what it consisted; and thus, how it is compatible with his Oneness with the Godhead, and with the attributes of Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom, as forming the essential nature of the Divine Object of worship. We explained what is the true idea attached to sacrifices as mentioned in the Holy Word, and how different that idea is from the notions commonly entertained, both of the meaning of the sacrifices in general, and of the nature of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; the true character of



which we were thus, I trust, enabled to establish. But there are other particulars connected with sacrifices, which strongly tend to illustrate the subject: on account, therefore, of its great importance, I will consider some of these, and further elucidate some that were but slightly touched upon before, in the present Lecture.

I will consider, *in the first place, the light thrown upon the subject by the passage which I have read as a text.* I will next *advert to some of the chief of the particulars directed to be observed in the offering of sacrifices, and will compare some of them with the circumstances attending the crucifixion of the Saviour.* And I will, *in the third place, revert to the true nature of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*

I. The whole of the Psalm from which the verses that I have read as a text are taken, is very remarkable for the strong testimony which it bears to the real character of the worship by sacrifices established in the Israelitish and Jewish Church. The direct and obvious instruction which the passage that I have read conveys, evinces the inutility, the utter worthlessness, and thus the unacceptableness, of the offering up of sacrifices, literally regarded, and when the worship of the offerer went no further than to the performance of the outward act; whence it follows, that it only could have been permitted, under the Israelitish and other representative dispensations, for the sake of the spiritual worship which it was intended to shadow forth, and with some degree of which, even under the most external dispensations, it must, to be productive of any benefit to the worshipper, have been joined. It is, indeed, a fact, howsoever contrary to common apprehension it may appear, that sacrifices were never, strictly speaking, of divine origin, for they were never of the divine will: they were only of divine permission, and thus of apparent command, by reason that the Israelites, had they not been allowed the worship of sacrifices, were of so gross a character, that they would not have been capable of any divine worship at all: had they not been permitted to offer sacrifices to the true God, they could not have been restrained from sacrificing to the false gods that were worshipped by the nations around them.

This fact, then,—that sacrifices were not of divine origin,—we will first offer some observations to prove.

It is plain from the bible-history, that sacrifices were in use among the ancient nations long before they were recognised by the divine law given by Moses to the Israelites: but, till that law was given, not a word is said to indicate that there was any divine command for the use of them. Whether they were originally introduced by divine command or not, is a question which has been much and warmly discussed among theological writers: but, were any divine command extant upon the subject, it is obvious that no such controversy could have been raised. Many feel that unless sacrifices had a divine origin, there is no ground for the doctrines which have been raised in modern times respecting the nature and efficacy of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The grand argument to prove that they had such an origin is drawn from the sacrifice, as it is commonly called, which is said to have been offered by Abel, and to have been acceptable to the Lord; and it is contended that if Abel had offered such a sacrifice of his own accord, without a divine command for it, we can hardly suppose it would have been so favorably accepted. This, however, is all supposition; and it is not a little remarkable that Abel's offering is not, in the sacred history, called a sacrifice at all, and no mention of any of the forms of sacrifice is made in relation to it. All that we read is, that "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord: and Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof: And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." And it has been strongly argued, that as the slaying of animals for food, or, as appears, for any other purpose, was not permitted till after the flood, it is not likely that Abel should do an act, when he meant to worship the Lord, which he must himself have regarded as shocking and criminal: and that hence the offerings of the flock could only consist of such things derived from the flock as he had permission to use; namely, the wool and the milk, with the products of the latter, such as butter and cheese.

But had the nature of this part of the divine writings been understood, the learned would not have taken so much pains as they have, on the one side, to prove, and on the other, to disprove, the divine origin of animal sacrifices from the offering of Abel; since, had the terms in which that offering is described been as plain as they are obscure, they still could not possibly prove that any animal sacrifice was offered by Abel at all,—much less that he performed such a sacrifice in compliance with a divine command: since, *we* are convinced, these first chapters of Genesis, which relate the history of Adam and Eve, of Cain and Abel, and their other posterity, were never intended by their Divine Author to be taken as a literal history of natural events, but are a history solely of the spiritual and moral state of man under the first Church or dispensation that ever existed on this globe, couched altogether in the language of pure allegory, and not of external history at all. Hence it is that we meet in this part of the Word of God with such apparently extravagant statements; as the formation of woman by taking a rib out of the man's side, and the seduction of this woman by a serpent, who possessed the faculty of speech as perfectly as a human being; with the loss of paradise, not through the commission of any act immoral in itself, but merely through the eating of the fruit of a certain tree; the injury resulting from which might also have been averted, by the appropriate remedy of eating the fruit of another tree, had not the Divine Being himself prevented it, and thus made the mischief permanent, by forcibly expelling the unhappy culprit from the place, where, alone, either tree grew. Surely there is in all this, and much more that is said in the first chapters of Genesis, so obviously the character of pure allegory, that it is wonderful how the readers of the Scriptures should ever have come to view it in any other light. The early fathers, as they are called, of the church, all regarded the whole narrative as a pure allegory: and it is a woeful mark of the carnal and darkened state into which the church in latter ages has fallen, that theologians should now, in general, deny it to be of this character, and affirm its literal truth. It is proper, however, to observe, that it would be a great mistake to suppose the Scripture-history at large to be mere allegory,

and not to be literally true : this is only the case with the early chapters of Genesis : and the reason why these chapters are written in such a style is, because they describe the state of a people who were in the habit of conveying spiritual and moral truths in the form of allegorical narratives, and who did not regard mere natural events of sufficient importance to be recorded at all : therefore the part of the divine Word which describes the state of such a people is written in a style similar to that which they themselves used.

In every respect, then, it is plain, that what is said regarding the offering of Abel, has no tendency to show that the actual slaying of animals in worship had a commencement in divine command or authority. Nothing that appears like a divine command for the practice is to be found till the giving of the law by Moses : and that then it was not of divine will, but only of divine permission, (though this permission, when descending into natural language accommodated to the state of the Jewish people, takes the form of command,) is very plainly declared, or shown, in various parts of the Holy Word. Thus the Lord says expressly by Jeremiah [ch. vii. 22], "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices : but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God and ye shall be my people : and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." Here the Lord expressly declares, that He did not command the presenting of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but only the duties of obedience ; whence we must conclude, that though the directions about sacrifices are also given as if commanded, yet in their literal form, or as to their outward performance, they were not of command, but only as to the spiritual things represented by them ; and that the external sacrifices themselves were only permitted, as unrestrained divorce was permitted, in accommodation to the gross state of the Israelitish people, or on account of the hardness of their hearts. It will follow, also, that the actual performance of the sacrifices was not of divine appointment, but only the mode of it ; so that, since it was seen that the people *would* have sacrifices, they

might be presented in such an order as to be truly representative of divine and spiritual things.

In the same manner the Lord denies sacrifices to have been originated by Him, when he says by Isaiah [ch. i. 11, 12], "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of rams, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" Where he explicitly declares that the actual slaughter of animals in sacrifice was never required by Him. So He says by Hosea [ch. vi. 6], "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings;" where indeed, as expressed by the translators, it appears as if burnt-offerings were desired by the Lord, only not *so much* as the knowledge of God: but the correct idea according to the original is, that burnt-offerings were not desired at all, just as sacrifice, of which burnt-offerings were a species, is said not to be desired; only, for the sake of changing the expression, in regard to burnt-offerings a form of speech is used, which either denotes an absolute negative, or only a comparative preference, according as it is applied: here, as an absolute negative is expressed in the first clause, the same is meant in the second also. In Micah, likewise, we have that beautiful and affecting soliloquy of the prophet, speaking as a member of the church earnestly inquiring the way of salvation [ch. vi. 6, 7]: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Then comes the plain and simple answer [ver. 8]: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Thus the most costly sacrifices are declared to be utterly useless, and the whole terms of acceptance with God are resolved into the simple duties of justice and mercy or charity, with an humble walk before the Lord, or a reference

of the thought and heart to Him through all the actions of our lives.

Not less decisive, as proving that the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, though the Lord had condescended to direct how they should be performed, in order that, since that people could not dispense with the worship of sacrifices, they might be such as should truly represent divine and spiritual things, and therefore such as might be connected with genuine worship,—thus, such as might afford a basis for heavenly influences, not such as could only be connected with influences from hell;—not less decisive, I say, as proving that the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, though so far sanctioned by the Lord, were not actually desired by Him, is the passage which I have selected for our present text. The Lord is remonstrating with the professing members of his church for their sins: “Hear, O my people,” He exclaims, “and I will speak: O Israel, and I will testify against thee. I will not reprove thee,” He proceeds, “for thy sacrifices or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat out of thy folds.” Then he proceeds to show, from rational considerations, how absurd it is to imagine that the Lord can possibly desire sacrifices of animals to be offered to Him. “For,” He reminds us, “every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills: I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof: will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?” Thus, when expostulating with his professing church for their delinquencies, the Lord expressly declares that he will not make their neglect of sacrifices any part of his charge against them, by reason that this is a mode of worship, which, in itself, is not required by Him, notwithstanding the precepts regulating the manner of it which are found in the Levitical code. Then he proceeds to mention a mode of worship which is more agreeable to his nature and attributes, and which, therefore, he does absolutely require: “Offer,” he says, “unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” It is true that the form of worship, being that of

prayer and thanksgiving, which he here commands, may be so performed as to be not more agreeable to the Lord than that of sacrifices: nevertheless, it is not, in itself, actually disagreeable to Him, and such as he can only tolerate by permission, but cannot actually desire and absolutely command, as is the case with sacrifices. He absolutely commands the worship of prayer and thanksgiving, because, though this is only the outward expression of internal worship, it is an expression which internal worship, wherever it really exists, will, at suitable seasons, naturally and spontaneously assume; which is not the case with the worship of sacrifices, between which, and the worship of the heart, there is no natural and necessary, but only an arbitrary and conventional connexion.

Thus far, however, we have not come to any such statement as we are led to expect, when the Lord begins this remonstrance with his people by stating what He will *not* reprove them about. Thus far He has only declared that he will not reprove them for their careless performance of sacrificial worship, has given reasons why sacrifices can never, under any circumstances, be actually desired by Him, and has mentioned a species of worship more acceptable to his nature: but He has not stated what the offences are for which He is constrained to utter the language of reprehension. This He does in the verses which follow those which I have read as the text: "But unto the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth; seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee? When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and has been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, and slanderest thine own mother's son." Thus the evils of theft, adultery, lying, and false witness, being all offences against charity and breaches of the decalogue, are selected as specimens of the evils which the Lord, or his Divine Truth, reprehends. On account of these, He says, in the next verse, "*I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.*" But for neglect of the sacrifices, he had before said, using the very same language, "*I will not reprove thee:*" most plainly showing that the things

which he really condemns are those which are forbidden in the decalogue, but that sacrifices were never instituted as being agreeable to his will.

Some, perhaps, are by this time ready to ask, "How does all this illustrate the subject of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ." In this way. If the sacrifices, on account of the degree of barbarity which attended them, were in themselves actually disagreeable to the Lord ;—if they are so constantly undervalued when spoken of even in the Old Testament, and the folly of depending upon them for salvation is so continually and forcibly exposed ; we see how impossible it is that they could be prescribed to shadow forth the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the manner in which that sacrifice is usually understood. It is supposed that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered as a victim for the sins of mankind transferred to his guiltless head by imputation, to satisfy the justice and appease the wrath of his offended Father : thus that his sufferings and death were literally a punishment sustained by him instead of those who are saved by faith in this sacrifice, who, otherwise, must have suffered the punishment of their own sins in death and misery eternal. But if this were the case,—if animals were slain in sacrifice to represent the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ undergone as the punishment of man's sins transferred to Him ; could it be possible for the inspired writers to speak so depreciatingly, in the name of Jehovah of those sacrifices ? Those sacrifices conveyed, it is supposed, the only knowledge then revealed respecting the future sacrifice of Jesus Christ ; whose coming as a Redeemer, a Mighty Deliverer, is, indeed, often foretold, from the prediction of Him as the Bruiser of the serpent's head immediately after the fall [Gen. iii. 15], to the announcement by Malachi [ch. iii. 1. 3,] of his suddenly coming to his temple, to sit as a refiner and purifier of silver : and the idea of Him most commonly presented is that of a Mighty Conqueror and a resistless Vindicator of his people : if then the animal sacrifices were the chief appointed means for keeping alive a knowledge of the sacrifice which He was to become himself, according to the idea of it just stated, how is it that they are so continually depreciated as worthless ? It is true that they who think the animal sacrifices were representative of the sacri-



fice of the Lord Jesus Christ as taking upon Him the punishment due to the sins of men, are also of opinion that they only had efficacy through faith in that sacrifice: but if so, how is it, when the value of sacrifices in themselves is depreciated as worthless, that their absolute inefficacy is insisted on, and no hint is ever given that the case would be different if they were connected with faith in a greater sacrifice to come,—no allusion is made to any other sacrifice whatever? How is it, also, that, when the uselessness of sacrifices is dwelt upon, the only thing put in contrast with them, as capable of rendering man agreeable to the Lord, is, not faith in another sacrifice, but a life of goodness in conformity with the divine commandments? Thus, when Isaiah, in a passage already quoted, represents the Lord as expressing disgust at the abundant sacrifices of the Jews of that day, and as asking [ch. i. 12], “Who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?” he follows it up with saying [ver. 16], “Wash you; make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well:” in which case he adds [ver. 18], “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” So when David says, when mourning for his crimes [Ps. li. 16], “Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it:” he adds [ver. 17], “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” And this is continually the order of discourse upon the subject in the inspired writers: whenever they speak of the uselessness of animal sacrifices, they add exhortations to a more efficacious worship, and urge the necessity of a life of charity and obedience. All which would be utterly unaccountable if the object of sacrifices was, to shadow out the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, regarded as an offering to appease offended Divine vengeance, and as a punishment undergone by substitution for the sins of mankind. Although then it is true, when rightly understood, that the Lord Jesus Christ was a sacrifice in submitting to death for the completion of the work of human redemption, yet it evidently must be in a very different way from what is commonly conceived. If his sufferings and death were a sacrifice to satisfy offended justice, by undergoing the

penalty due to sin in his own person that it might not fall on the true culprits ; and if this was represented by the sacrifices of the Levitical law, and was known to be so by those who offered those sacrifices ; then it would be impossible that ever those sacrifices should be depreciated as useless, and as being, by themselves, an absolute abomination to the Lord ; and it would be more impossible still, that obedience to the moral law should be continually put in contrast with the worship of sacrifices, and insisted on as that, by which alone man can hope for acceptance with God. What modern teacher of what are mistakenly called evangelical sentiments, would think of extolling obedience to the commandments as infinitely more valuable in the sight of God than the sacrifice of Jesus Christ ? And yet this is done perpetually by the Lord himself, speaking in his own person by the prophets, if the sacrifices of animals represented that of Jesus Christ in the manner commonly understood.

II. We considered in our last some of the circumstances of *the Levitical sacrifices* ; and I will now proceed to notice a few *other of the principal particulars directed to be observed in their actual performance, and will compare some of them with the circumstances attending the crucifixion of the Saviour*. All have an important spiritual signification ; and it will be seen that it is so impossible to apply them to the circumstances of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, that, the further the import of the various particulars is investigated, the more shall we be constrained to wonder how it ever came to be imagined, that their grand and whole design was, to shadow out the death by crucifixion of our Gracious Redeemer, as a substituted punishment for the sins of mankind.

The first thing directed to be done on bringing a burnt-offering or any other animal sacrifice, was, that the offerer "should put his hand upon its head" [Lev. i. 4, &c.]. We noticed in our last, that this action is supposed to imply the representative transfer of his guilt from himself to the victim ; whereas, in reality, no confession of sins ever accompanied this ceremony, and no representative transfer of guilt was effected, except in the case of the scape-goat, which was thereby made unclean, abominable, and therefore incapable of being sacrificed. Every animal that was sacrificed repre-

sented some good affection of innocence or charity, from which man can offer an acceptable worship to the Lord : and the offerer's putting his hand upon the head of the animal denoted, that he worshipped the Lord from such affection as proceeding from his own heart, and with all the power he possessed, for of this the hand is an emblem ; in other words, that, according to the divine precept, he thereby worshipped the Lord "with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might,"—that the adoration and love with which he elevated his mind to the Lord, he offered, though with the acknowledgment that all is from the Lord, from and for himself, and that it was not done from and by any other being for him. Thus the action of putting his hand on the head of his offering, instead of representing, in any way, the substitution of one being for another, represents, in reality, the very reverse.

The next thing directed is [Lev. i. 5], that the person bringing the sacrifice, "shall kill the bullock [or other animal] before the Lord." The use of the word *kill* here, with the fact that every animal offered in sacrifice was necessarily put to death, is supposed greatly to support the idea, that punishment was hereby signified, so that the killing of the animal was a representation of the punishment—the privation of life eternal—due for his sins to him who offered it. But it is to be observed, that the word [*shachat*] here used in the original, is not one which properly signifies *killing in general* ; but simply *slaughtering for food* ; and it is only metaphorically, and in very few instances, that the word is ever used to signify killing in general. The proper meaning of the word is, *to divest the animal of its blood*, so as to make it fit to be used for food ; hence the idea intended to be suggested is not that of *putting to death*, or *destroying*, but simply that of *preparing for food*. The word [*zabach*] also, commonly and truly translated *to sacrifice*, always includes the idea of preparing for food. It is true that, to prepare an animal for food, he must be put to death ; but still the idea in view is, not that of *putting to death*, but that of *making ready as meat*.

It is a most important fact, essential to the forming of any just conception of the true import of the worship by sacrifices, that they are always considered as *food* offered to the Lord. This is acknowledged by the commentators ; and this is the

reason that the sacrifices consisted, not only of animals, but also of flour and cakes prepared with oil, of corn beaten out of the ear, and of wine. On this account, and because all food is called in Scripture by the general term *bread*—bread not only signifying, in Scripture language, the food prepared from grain, but answering, besides, to our word, *food*, in all its extent of meaning,—the sacrifices are perpetually called in Scripture *the bread of God*. Thus it is over and over said in the 21st chapter of the book of Leviticus, as a reason why the priests should not defile themselves, and that no son of Aaron having any imperfection should minister as a priest, that they “offer *the bread of their God*.” In treating of the peace-offering, our translators have called it the Lord’s “*food* :” we read (ch. iii. 11), “And the priests shall burn it upon the altar ; it is the *food* of the offering made by fire unto the Lord.” In Ezekiel (xliv. 7), the fat and the blood are expressly named the Lord’s *bread*. Reproving the Israelites, the Lord says by that prophet,—“Ye have brought strangers, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer *my bread, the fat and the blood*.” Because the priests, in the time of Malachi, were in the habit of offering blind, lame, and deceased *animals* in sacrifice, the Lord reproaches them by the prophet [ch. i. 7], saying, “Ye offer polluted *bread* upon mine altar.” In short, the altar was regarded as the Lord’s table, and is expressly called so, and the sacrifices offered upon it were regarded as his food. Thus the passage just quoted proceeds thus : “And ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee ?” To which it is answered, “In that ye say, The *table* of the Lord is contemptible.” And then mention is made of their offering imperfect animals for sacrifice. So it is said a little after [ver. 12], respecting the Lord’s name, “Ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The *table* of the Lord is polluted, and the fruit thereof, even his *meat* [so our translators give it here], is contemptible.”

It is quite certain then, that, under the Levitical code, the altar was considered as the Lord’s table, and the sacrifices offered upon it as his food or meat : consequently, the killing of the animal to be offered cannot be intended to express its punishment, or the punishment of any other being, as a substitute for

the offerer, but simply, the preparation of the animal to serve as food. When animals are slaughtered for food, no one thinks of their death as a punishment; and though their undergoing suffering in the operation is unavoidable, yet this is in no respect the *end* intended: a humane person makes the suffering as slight as possible, and, could it be avoided altogether, that would be preferred by all. A comparison of the animal-offerings with sacrifices of other kinds will show, that, in the offering of the former, no reference was made to its death. Thus when cakes were to be presented for a meat offering, corn must first have been ground into flour to make them, and they were ordered [Lev. ii. 4], to be "baken in the oven;" and when a meat-offering of the first fruits was to be made, it was directed [chap. ii. 14], that it should consist of "green ears of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears." Here, the grinding of the flour and baking of the cakes, to form a meat-offering of cakes, and the drying of the corn and beating it out of the ear, for a meat-offering of first fruits, were operations occupying the same place in sacrifices of that sort, as the killing did in sacrifices of animals: they were the necessary preparation of them for food of that kind, before they could be burnt upon the altar; as the slaying was the necessary preparation of the animal before that could be made fit for food. And there was no more idea of suffering, or even of death, intended to be conveyed in the slaughtering of the beast, than there was in the baking of the cake, in the previous grinding of the flour, and in the drying and threshing of the corn. Consequently, there was no more reference intended to the undergoing of punishment by substitution, in the one case, than there was in the others.

As it is so evident, that, in the slaying of the animal sacrifices, there was no allusion to vicarious punishment, it is plain that there could be no reference to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, considered as the suffering, by substitution, of the punishment due to the sins of mankind. But whoever looks at the widely different circumstances of the two cases, will indeed wonder how, in the death of the animal, theologians could discern the death by crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The animal was slaughtered, by him who offered him, before

the Lord, as the supreme act of humble devotion: Was the death of Jesus an act of worship on the part of those who nailed him to the cross?—The animal thus slaughtered was accepted for the offerer, “to make atonement for him:” Did the chief priests and Pharisees actually make atonement for themselves by crucifying the Lord? Was this what they meant when they exclaimed, to appease the conscience of the Roman governor [Matt. xxvii. 25], “His blood be on us, and on our children?”—The offerers of sacrifices repeated them occasionally, which expressed permanence or advancement in the state of devoted piety represented by the act: Would it therefore be a mark of permanence or advancement in piety to crucify the Lord afresh? Are those who are steadily advancing in piety thereby perpetually crucifying the Lord over again? How does this idea agree with the declaration of the Apostle in Heb. vi. 6, that, not they who advance in piety, but they “who draw back unto perdition,” “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh?”—The animal was sacrificed “at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord:” Was Jesus sacrificed (as they call it) in the same situation? Was calvary—the place of a skull,—where malefactors were executed, and all sorts of abominations existed, a place equally holy, and proper for the performance of sacrifices, as the door of the tabernacle or temple? And suppose it had been—suppose, even, that the Lord had been crucified where Zacharias, the son of Barachias [Matt. xxiii. 37], was murdered—in the space between the temple and the altar; what sort of acceptance could have attended such a sacrifice? Was not the offering of human sacrifices the greatest abomination that could be practised, and one of those for which, as the Lord tells the Israelites, their predecessors in the land of Canaan were destroyed; and, as he declares [Lev. xviii. 21, 25], “the land is defiled: therefore do I visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants?” In short, no ingenuity whatever, that I can conceive of, can find any sort of parallelism between the sacrificing of an animal on the altar before the tabernacle as an act of humble worship and acknowledgment of the Lord as the author of the good represented, and the crucifying of the Lord himself without the city, which

was an act in the perpetrators of the most desperate cruelty, blasphemous hatred, and determined rejection.

Thus it appears abundantly evident, that, when the particulars observed in the offering of sacrifices are considered, either by themselves, or in comparison with the circumstances attending the death on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, the notion that they prefigured that event, regarded as a suffering of the punishment due to the sins of mankind, falls completely to the ground.

III. *To revert, then, to the True Nature of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ:* It remains that, as shown in our last Lecture, the way in which the sacrifices of the Levitical law represented this sacrifice, is just the same as that in which they represented the sacrifice of every individual man,—every follower and disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, who becomes regenerate. The Lord continually commands his disciples in the gospel, to take up their cross and follow Him. He also tells those who are willing to follow him without reserve, as the two sons of Zebedee professed to be [Matt. xx. 22, 23], that they must drink of the cup which he drank of, and be baptized with the baptism that He was baptized withal: plainly teaching, that the progress of the Christian in the regenerate or spiritual life, is to be an exact copy of his Lord's progress in the work of the glorification of his Humanity. As He, as to his Humanity, underwent a process of glorification, whereby his Humanity itself was rendered Divine by perfect union with the Divinity of the Father, so man is to undergo a process of regeneration, whereby he is to be rendered spiritual, and attain a subordinate kind of union with the divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. This process is commonly called, by theologians, sanctification; which term is justified by the use of it by the Lord Jesus Christ. "For their sakes," says He [John xvii. 19], "I sanctify myself; that they also may be sanctified through the truth:" intimating, that in consequence of his undergoing a process of divine sanctification, which, for the sake of distinction, it is as well to call glorification, (which term, also, is more frequently used by himself), his followers should undergo a process of spiritual sanctification, which is conveniently expressed by the term regeneration, through the

operating upon them of the Spirit of truth communicated from his glorified Humanity. Thus the glorification of his Humanity was an indispensable preliminary to the regeneration of man. From no other source could the power be communicated, necessary to raise man from the fallen state into which he is sunk to a state of spiritual life, but from the Glorified Humanity, the Divine Person, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Most truly therefore did he say, "For their sakes,"—for the sake of mankind, and especially of those who become his disciples,—“For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” In the very same sense he says elsewhere [John xiv. 19], “Because I live, ye shall live also;” all the spiritual life of man being derived solely from his glorified Humanity, which lives by a life purely divine, in consequence of its perfect union with the Essential Divinity.

The sacrifices of the Mosaic law, viewed in their whole series or as to all their particulars, represent, in their supreme sense, the whole of the process by which the Lord glorified his Humanity, or rendered it divine, by exalting it to perfect union with the Divinity of the Father: and hence also, since the regeneration of man is an image of the glorification of the Lord, the sacrifices, in their whole series and all their particulars, no less truly and exactly image the regeneration of man. Hence (to advert once more to a passage quoted in our last) man, when truly regenerate, is called by the Apostle Paul a living sacrifice: and he is a sacrifice precisely in the same sense as the Lord Jesus Christ was. As a man is not, when regenerated, a sacrifice to the wrath of God, a victim to appease the Divine Vengeance,—a subject of horrible sufferings to satisfy the Divine Justice; so neither was the Lord Jesus Christ. I must recite the Apostle's words a little more at length than [I did] before [Roman xii. 1, 2]: “I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God; which is your reasonable service: and be ye not conformed to the image of the world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Never does he speak [more explicitly of the Lord Jesus Christ as being a sacrifice. By presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, he means, the whole man; as appears from his



explaining how this is to be done, namely, by the *renewing of our mind*. It is remarkable, also, that he here makes a designed allusion to the sacrifices of the Mosaic law. He calls the presenting of our bodies, or of ourselves, as a living sacrifice, "our reasonable service:" where the word translated service is that which is always employed to express the service or worship performed in the tabernacle or temple, and which consisted principally of animal sacrifices. This presenting of ourselves as a sacrifice unto God, he calls, "our *reasonable* service;" where the word reasonable is not employed in the sense which it now commonly bears, as if he meant to say, it is reasonable, or right and equitable, that we should do this,—though this also is true; but he employs the word reasonable as the opposite of carnal or material,—as implying what is of the mind and understanding, and thus also of the affections, instead of being the mere offering of some dead substance,—some material object,—as were the literal sacrifices of animals. He means to say, that by thus offering ourselves as a living sacrifice unto God, we perform a service or worship in which the mind is everything—a mental and rational service,—instead of a service which consisted in carnal ordinances alone,—of offerings of external objects, not immediately connected with, much less constituting part of, the mind of the worshipper.

This mental worship then,—this worship of the heart, mind, and purified affections,—was, as we have seen, represented by the worship of sacrifices as regulated by the Levitical law. The animals offered were all such as represented, and are forms in nature corresponding to, those affections and perceptions of the will and understanding which alone can be acceptable to the Lord,—affections of innocence, represented by the lamb, of charity, imaged by the sheep, of natural good, or justice and equity, typified by the bullock; with faith, of which the emblem was the goat. The different kinds of sacrifices,—which, however, always consisted of these animals, with the addition, from among birds, of turtle-doves and pigeons, as 'types of purification;—represented the worship of man under all the varying circumstances of his regenerative process, in which affections of good and perceptions of truth are continually received by him from the

Lord, and, his own evils, everything from his own self-hood that would defile them, being rejected and separated, are offered to the Lord in worship, in the devout acknowledgment that they all are his alone,—are of Him in man,—and still belong truly to their Divine Original, and not to man himself. When the whole man thus worships the Lord, being a recipient of good from Him through all the powers of his frame, which he gratefully ascribes to Him its source, he is himself what the Apostle calls a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. It was by a process of this kind in the Supreme Degree that the Lord rendered his Humanity Divine, and perfectly united it to the Divinity of the Father; and it is by a process imitative of the one thus passed through by the Lord Jesus Christ, that man becomes spiritual, and attains conjunction with the Lord's Divine Humanity, whence he derives heavenly blessings throughout eternity.

We have now, I trust, accomplished what was proposed in the three divisions of this Lecture. We have seen that the remarkable passage which I have read as a text, in common with numerous similar statements of Holy Writ, strikingly declares the non-acceptableness of the worship by sacrifices, either regarded by themselves, or if supposed to shadow forth the sacrifice of a superior, a more than human, even a Divine Being, as a substituted victim for the sins of mankind; and demonstrates that such an interpretation of them cannot be the true one. We have seen, also, on considering some of the chief particulars directed to be observed in the performance of sacrifices, and comparing them with the circumstances attending the crucifixion of the Saviour of mankind, that although, when regulated in a manner agreeable to the laws of divine order in their ultimate form, and according to the correspondence between natural objects and spiritual essences which exists by creation, as was secured by the Levitical enactments, the worship by sacrifices was capable of being made exactly representative of true internal worship, and thus of effecting, in a certain wonderful manner, a communication with Heaven, that might conduce to the spiritual benefit of the sincere worshipper, there was nothing in them to indicate, or that was compatible with the idea, that their grand

designa was to shadow out the crucifixion of the Redeemer, as a vicarious punishment for the sins of mankind. The worship by sacrifices, we have seen, though capable of representing true internal worship, and of promoting something approaching to it amongst a carnal people, and therefore tolerated by the Lord, was so far, in and by itself, from being agreeable to Him, as to be actually displeasing, because inseparably connected with suffering in the victim; and suffering in any shape, though much of it exists unavoidably in a world where sin has entered and established so general an empire, is not agreeable, but hateful, to Him who is benignity and goodness itself, even when inflicted on an irrational animal. As, from this cause, animal sacrifices, though capable of being so performed as most accurately to represent pure internal worship, were not in themselves pleasing to the Lord, so human sacrifices, though in idea they might represent worship of the highest possible order, consisting in the surrender of the inmost life to the Lord,—the most absolute self-devotion,—as in the *quasi* sacrifice of Isaac,—yet as involving, if actually performed, one of the most diabolical of crimes, being incapable of being practised without the perpetration of murder,—they were the most horrible abominations that could be committed, and were in the highest degree profane, because combining a representative of the inmost worship of the Lord with a most atrocious act of wickedness. It is most impossible then that the cruel murder of Jesus Christ by the Jews could be intended to be regarded as a human sacrifice, still less as a divine sacrifice, offered and accepted in lieu of the perdition of mankind. Thus, finally, are we further enabled to see, how the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be regarded as a sacrifice, and in what its efficacy consisted; not that his sufferings were in any respect pleasing to the Father, nor that He bore them in the way of substitution for the sins of men: but because his Humanity was hereby totally dedicated and devoted to his Divinity, all the life of the merely human nature,—of all that belonged to Him as the Son of Mary,—being extinguished, so as to admit of the descent of the divine life into the Humanity also, even to its ultimate corporeal elements, abolishing everything that could not bear the presence of the “consuming fire” [Deut. iv. 24, Rev. i. 15],

thus everything material, and substituting divine substantiality in its place; whence He rose from the dead, and ascended to the most absolute union with the Father or Inmost Divinity, to operate thence, from his Humanity thus itself Divine, the graces of salvation in those who look to Him, and follow Him.

Thus by the Levitical sacrifices, rescued from erroneous and inapplicable interpretations, the true nature of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ is greatly illustrated; and most important practical lessons are at the same time conveyed. Though not in themselves agreeable to the Lord, on account of the circumstances of suffering attending them, yet when the idea of these is removed (and it is, as far as possible, kept out of sight in the ordinances on the subject), it is easy to see, in sacrifices and from them, what the true worship of the Lord must be. He can only be approached from good affections and with pure thoughts. Man can have neither the one nor the other but by communication from Him; which communication has been made possible, and easy, by the grand sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing this, man must gratefully acknowledge it. Thus cultivating heavenly affections, and worshipping the Lord from them, he must manifest their activity in his life and conversation. His own regeneration, which is an image of the Lord's glorification, will be thus accomplished. He will be "transformed by the renewing of his mind" [Rom. xii. 2]; he will render continually unto the Lord a "reasonable," or rational and mental "service;" and will at length be raised by Him, to be "with Him where He is," and to "behold his glory." [John xvii. 24.]

## LECTURE XVI.

**SALVATION BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST : HOW IT IS EFFECTED :  
AND HOW IT IS CONSISTENT WITH HIS ONENESS WITH THE  
GODHEAD, AND WITH THE ATTRIBUTES OF INFINITE LOVE AND  
WISDOM AS FORMING THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE DIVINE  
OBJECT OF WORSHIP.**

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Rev. v. 9.

*“ And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”*

WE are now in the second branch of the general division of subjects of which these lectures were to treat. The first branch consisted of subjects relating to the nature and person of the Divine Object of Worship: the second comprises the subjects relating to his great works for accomplishing the redemption and salvation of mankind. In the course of my former Lectures I have endeavoured to prove, that God, as to his Essence, is Love Itself and Wisdom Itself, and that no attributes at variance with these can have any place in his nature. As to the Divine Person, I have endeavoured to establish the Absolute Unity of the Godhead in person as well as in essence, the agreement therewith of the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, and the concentration of the three essentials of the Godhead, called Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the Glorified Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In endeavouring to obtain a favourable hearing for this sublime doctrine, I observed that it ought to recommend itself to all classes of the religious world, as removing the difficulties with which all the commonly prevailing systems are encumbered,

Trinitarians, when they become Tripersonalists, and divide the divinity among three separate persons, each of whom, "by himself," is affirmed to be God and Lord, must be much embarrassed with the numerous declarations of Scripture which affirm the absolute Unity of the Divine Object of Worship. Unitarians, when they become what is better expressed by the name applied to them by the celebrated Mr. Coleridge—Psilanthropists,—by insisting on the simple humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, are much annoyed by the numerous passages of Scripture, in which his divinity is directly asserted, or from which it is obviously to be inferred. The former have adopted their notion of a tripersonality for the sake of preserving, what they see the Scriptures so plainly teach, the Divinity of Jesus Christ and the Trinity in the Divine nature. The latter have adopted their persuasion of the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, for the sake of preserving what the Scriptures every where assert, the indivisible unity of the Godhead. Both parties then, so far as they are lovers of truth, should regard with favour the view that we offer, which preserves the great object intended by each without making it liable to the objections urged by the other;—which maintains the Trinity without infringing the indivisible Unity, and preserves the Unity in combination with the supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ:—which unreservedly admits the testimony of the One Eternal Jehovah when he says, "I am God, and there is none else;" and that of Jesus when he declares, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father,"—when he states, that the Father, as the Divine Essence, dwells with Him, and when he shows, by the significant action of breathing on his disciples, saying at the same time, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," that the Holy Ghost is the Divine influence and operation, proceeding from Him.

Now the same discrepancy which exists between Tripersonalists and Unitarians on the subject of the Divine Person, exists between them also in regard to the redemption and salvation of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Author. It is the manner in which our redemption and salvation were effected by Him that we are considering in this second branch of our Lectures; in which I first treated of the true nature of redemption, properly

so called, as consisting in the deliverance of man, by Jehovah clothed with Human Nature, from the preponderating power of hell: and the subject of our last two Lectures was, first, *the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; in what it consisted; and how it is compatible with his Oneness with the Godhead, and with the attributes of Infinite Love and Wisdom as forming the Essential Nature of the Divine Object of Worship*; and secondly, *Particulars relating to the Levitical Sacrifices which illustrate the same*. This evening I am to consider the subject of *Salvation by the Blood of Jesus Christ*; and to inquire *how it is effected, and is consistent with the same Attributes of the Divine Person and Nature*.

No doctrine is more insisted on by Trinitarians in general, especially by those who consider their sentiments to be peculiarly evangelical, than this, of salvation by the Blood of Jesus Christ: they contend that it is solely by virtue of the blood, or of the sufferings and death, of Jesus Christ, that salvation is attainable: for they conceive that, by no other means, could the wrath of the Father be appeased, which had condemned all mankind to misery eternal. The Unitarians affirm that this is supposing one God to have died to appease the wrath of another God; which is a fragrant violation of the Divine Unity. They also contend, that this is representing the Father as a God of wrath and vengeance; which is assigning him attributes the opposites of love and goodness. They consider, therefore, that the blood, or death and sufferings, of Jesus Christ, had no other effect in promoting man's salvation, than as completing that example of perfect obedience and resignation, which, together with the purity of his moral precepts, was, they suppose, the great object of his mission. Here, again, then, the doctrines which we offer as those of the True Christian Religion come between these two contending parties. We admit that the Unitarian's representation of the doctrine of salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, as held by the Tripersonalist, is but too true; that it is indeed inconsistent with the absolute Oneness of the Godhead, and with the Essential Nature of a Deity whose first attribute is Love. But our doctrines affirm with the Trinitarian, in opposition to the Unitarian, that the blood-shedding, or the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, were of indispensable necessity, if man were to be

saved ; that though they are distinct things from Redemption, Redemption could not have been completed without them ; that, in fact, there is, and could be, no Salvation, but through the blood of Jesus Christ. But, again, to reconcile this statement to the Unitarian, and to the dictates of reason, we maintain, that the doctrine of Salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, as contained in the Scriptures, is in perfect agreement with the indivisible Unity of the Godhead,—yea, with his own supreme and sole Divinity ; and equally so with the attribute of Infinite Love, as forming the first essential in the nature of Deity.

In stating the doctrine of salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ as commonly maintained, I have spoken of his blood as being mentioned to express his sufferings and death. I have stated the common doctrine to be, that it is solely by virtue of the blood, or of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, that salvation is attainable. This is actually the manner in which the subject is generally understood : when preachers and writers speak of the blood of Jesus Christ, they always mean by the expression, his sufferings and death. I will therefore, in the first place, endeavour to show, *That the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ were indispensably necessary to man's salvation: and in what manner they were so; not by appeasing the wrath of the Father as a separate Divine Person, but as needful to complete the glorification of the Lord's Humanity, or its perfect assimilation to the Divine Essence, without which the influences of the Holy Spirit, necessary for the conveyance of the gifts of salvation, could not have been imparted to mankind.* I will next show, *That by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, in a figurative natural sense, as commonly used in the writings of the Apostles, is meant his death, as indispensably necessary for the purposes just mentioned.* I will prove, finally, *That the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, when spoken of by the Lord himself in the gospels, is properly to be understood in a spiritual manner ; and that then it never signifies his death and sufferings ; but the communications of his Holy Spirit, proceeding from his Glorified Humanity, to convey spiritual life, and thus salvation, to mankind.* From the whole it will appear, that the doctrine of Salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, as actually contained in the Scriptures, is in perfect harmony



with that of the Indivisible Unity of the Divine Essence, and of the perfect Oneness of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his Glorified Humanity, with the Eternal Jehovah ; and with the Attributes of Infinite Love and Wisdom, as forming the Essential Nature of the Divine Object of Worship.

I. First, then, I am to show, *That the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ were indispensably necessary to man's salvation ; and in what manner they were so.*

The reason, why the Lord Jesus Christ, out of his love to mankind, made himself subject also to death, or laid down his life, was, because, first, He could not otherwise finish his conflicts with the infernal powers, and deliver man from their preponderating influence ; in which deliverance, as we have seen in two Lectures on the subject, the Redemption of man properly consisted : because, secondly, his Humanity could not otherwise have been glorified, or completely assimilated to the Divine Nature, so as to become One Person with his Essential Divinity : and because, thirdly, such a divine influence could not else have been imparted, as should enable man to profit by the Lord's work of Redemption, and attain salvation. Hence also it was, that such cruelties were inflicted on his person : all which were spiritually significative, at the same time that they literally occurred.

The cruelties which were inflicted on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, not only were attended with dreadful outward sufferings, but represented the inward conflicts in which He was at the same time engaged with the infernal powers, and the ferocity and obstinacy with which these contended for victory, knowing that, if they could prevail on the relics of infirmity, which attached to the Redeemer in what he had received from the human mother, to appropriate their suggestions, so as actually to fall under any of their temptations, the glorification of his Humanity would be rendered impossible, and, of consequence, the salvation of man would be defeated. The Apostle Paul gives very clear information respecting the nature and design of the Lord's sufferings, in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus he states [ch. iv. 15], that Jesus "was in all points tempted as we are, yet was without sin : " whence we learn, that He had adhering

to Him the same infirmities of nature as we have, derived from the human mother; these being what afforded the ground by which alone the infernals could approach Him with temptations. They can only act upon what is admmissive of their influence; wherefore, if there were no propensities to evil hereditary in the nature of man, he could not be liable to temptation from the infernal hosts. Neither could the Lord when in the flesh, had He not taken a nature from Mary which included every propensity that existed in her: for, as the Apostle says again [Heb. ii. 17], "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren;" whence, as he likewise adds [ver. 18], "in that he hath himself suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

Man, however, always brings some of his hereditary inclinations to evil into act, whence they are appropriated to him, and become what is properly called *sin*: for sin is evil brought into act; or, if not into outward act, so confirmed in will and thought by meditating on and intending it, that nothing but a suitable opportunity is wanted for bringing it into outward performance. But the Apostle assures us that Jesus was "without sin;" by which he instructs us, that although He had, in the imperfect nature inherited from the human mother, the same "infirmities" as ourselves, yet He never brought any of them into act, nor even into intention, resisting and rejecting them whenever they were excited by the infernal powers; which was, during his whole life upon earth. Thus, although continually tempted, He was victorious in every conflict; till at length, all the remnant of imperfection being extirpated, no infernal influence could possibly approach Him any more. The last of these conflicts or temptations was at the passion of the cross. Then, while He was outwardly assailed with all the contumely and cruelty that men, or rather demons incarnate, could be capable of, He was assailed inwardly with all the tortures of mind, all the suggestions to relinquish entirely the human race to their malice, that all the powers of hell, including every spirit belonging to their kingdom, combined for a last great effort, could urge or insinuate. But although his human nature was, in this great contest, apparently left to itself, He did not in the slightest de-

gree yield to the diabolical injections. The object of the demoniacal powers was, to compel Him to leave mankind to their fury, and to give up his concern for man's salvation; but that He did not, to the last, yield in this respect a hair's breadth, may be inferred from his expiring words, when he said [John xix. 28], "I thirst:" for the Lord's thirst is nothing but his intense desire that man would receive the blessings which He is desirous to bestow,—thus, that man may be saved. Still, the obstinacy with which the infernal powers urged their assaults, appeared, to the Humanity thus left to itself, so insuperable, that a sense of despair arose, and occasioned the exclamation, [Matt. xxvii. 46], "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," by which we learn, not that the Lord Jesus was indeed forsaken, or was destitute of support from the Essential Divinity within Him, but that the mere humanity, or that received from the finite human mother, was brought to this sense of destitution, as necessary to prepare for the full descent of the Divinity, and that this might entirely renew the Humanity, and become the all in all in it.

Thus it was that, by submitting to a violent death, or by laying down the life of his natural humanity, and this under circumstances of such dreadful suffering, the Lord Jesus Christ became a Saviour to his people. To speak again in the accurately descriptive language of the apostle [Heb. ii. 10]: "He was made perfect through sufferings" by which the Apostle means, that his Humanity was thus assimilated in perfection to his Divinity. As the Apostle says again [Heb. v. 8, 9], "He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and, being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him:" where by his learning obedience is meant, the entire conformity of his Human Nature to his Divine: and by his becoming the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, is meant, that He assumed the power of conferring salvation upon those, who, in like manner, learn obedience of Him, and follow Him. Thus his sufferings and death were indispensably necessary to our salvation; since, without them, the Divine Life could not have descended, so as entirely to assimilate to itself the whole of the Human Nature, even to the body also: or, according to

the observations in our last two Lectures, the Human Nature could not have become a sacrifice,—a thing wholly devoted, sanctified, glorified, and united to the Divinity. And without this, he could not have become to us “the Author of eternal salvation.”

II. I am in the next place to show, *That by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, in a figurative natural sense, as commonly used in the writings of the Apostles, is meant his death, as indispensably necessary for the purposes just explained.*

The passages in which the whole of the salvation of man is ascribed to the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, are by no means so numerous as a person would suppose, who should attend to the manner in which the subject is so often treated in the religious world. Many religious persons and teachers have the phrase “the blood of Christ,” or “the blood of the Lamb,” perpetually on their lips; and a stranger to the Scriptures would suppose, from this use of it by those who profess thence to derive their views of divine truth, that it must occur in every verse, or at least in every chapter of the New Testament. This, however, is far indeed from being the case: and all the doctrines of the Christian religion might be fully expressed, were it never used at all. I mean, that although its occurrence in Scripture, though not frequent, was unquestionably necessary, its doctrinal import may easily be conveyed in other terms.

By the Lord himself, his *flesh* is always spoken of in company with his *blood*; as when he declares to the Jews [John vi. 53], “Except ye eat the *flesh* of the Son of man, and drink his *blood*, ye have no life in you:” and as when he says, in the institution of the holy supper [Matt. xxvi 26, 27], “Take, eat: this is my *body*;—drink ye all of it; this is my *blood*.” In fact, he never speaks of the one without the other: but then, as we shall see presently, when he speaks of it, his language is properly to be understood in a purely spiritual manner.

In the book of the Acts, though the Apostles are continually directing their hearers to Jesus, they mention his blood only once. This is in Paul’s address to the Ephesian elders, to whom he says [Acts xx. 28], “The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with

his own *blood*." In the Epistle to the Romans, it is mentioned twice. Speaking of Jesus, the Apostle says [ch. iii. 25], "Whom God hath set forth, to be a propitiation through faith in his *blood*." Again: [ch. v. 8, 9], "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then, being now justified by his *blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him."—In neither of the two Epistles to the Corinthians is the blood of Christ mentioned at all, except in reciting the Lord's own words in the institution of the holy supper.—Nothing whatever is said of it to the Galatians. To the Ephesians, speaking of Jesus, Paul says [ch. i. 7], "In whom we have redemption, through his *blood*:" and again, [ch. ii. 13], "Ye who were sometime afar off, are made nigh by the *blood* of Christ."—To the Colossians, the Apostle says, [ch. i. 19, 20], "For it pleased (the Father) that in him (Jesus) should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace by the *blood* of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself."—It is not mentioned in either of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians—nor in either of those to Timothy,—nor in that to Titus,—nor in that to Philemon.—To the Hebrews, Paul says of Jesus [ch. ix. 12—14], "By his own *blood* he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the *blood* of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God." Again, he says [ch. x. 19], that we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the *blood* of Jesus." Again [ch. xii. 24], that we are come "to the *blood* of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." And, finally [ch. xiii. 12], that "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own *blood*, suffered without the gate."—These are all the passages that mention the Lord's blood in the writings of the Apostle Paul; which I recite to show how little this Apostle has said upon the subject, though ordinary teachers suppose his doctrine respecting it to be the same as their own. Of the other writers of the New Testament, Peter mentions it twice,—James, not at all,—John, twice in his first Epistle, and in the Revelation three times.

Now, in all these places, even if it is wished to abide in a merely natural idea of the Lord's blood, it is plain that the blood actually poured from his body on the cross cannot be meant. This was spilled on the ground, and mixed with the elements: and how faith can be exercised in this blood, or how it can benefit the sinner, is wholly inconceivable. Neither can it be conceived how this blood can, as affirmed in one of the last quotations, "purify the conscience from dead or evil-works." If then it still is wished to understand what is said of the Lord's blood in a *natural* sense, it is evident that we must take it, metaphorically, for his *death*: which is a sense that blood unquestionably bears very often in the idiom of all languages; as when the Jews exclaimed, "His blood be upon us and-upon our children;" evidently meaning, the guilt of his *death*. Now in all the passages which we have adduced, where it is said that we are "purchased by his blood," "reconciled by his blood," "justified through his blood," and the like; if by the term we understand *the laying down of his life*, we shall obtain a clear and true signification of the expression. This is evident from what was advanced in our last two Lectures; in which we showed that [the Lord's death was the completion of the sacrifice which He made of himself to the Father, and that this sacrifice was neither more nor less than the rendering of his Humanity divine, by extirpating from it all that was inherited from the human mother, and combining it in perfect union with the Divine Essence, as the body is united to the soul, so that in it, afterwards, "the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily" [Col. ii. 9], as in the body of a man dwells the whole of his soul. Now if by this union, as has been shown in several former Lectures, the divine influences upon man were so attempered, and yet, as to him, strengthened, that he was made capable of being affected by them in a manner which before was impossible, on account of the low state to which he had sunk; we shall see how true it is, that all that is stated by the Apostle, in the passages we have quoted, was really effected for man by the blood, meaning thereby the *death*, of the Lord Jesus Christ. By the reception of the divine aids thus afforded, man is "justified," or made and accounted just,—is "brought nigh," "reconciled," "purified," and

“purchased,”—or rescued from the power of the devil and engaged in the service of God. In short, thus understood, no representation of the virtues of “the blood of the Lamb, however exalted and magnified, can possibly exceed the truth.

Here, I must pause a moment to observe, here is matter, which is amply indeed calculated, if we allow it to engage our reflections as it ought, to move in the strongest manner both the natural and the spiritual affections at once. Most assuredly, “greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” [John. xv. 13]. None acknowledge this divine truth more gratefully than we. If the laying down of life for his friends were an affecting occurrence even on the part of an ordinary human being, how ought it to be considered when we reflect, in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom* it was done. It is true, indeed, that we cannot consider that part of Him which suffered and died to be Jehovah Himself; but, assuredly, as that which suffered and died had no other soul than Jehovah himself,—was animated by a life emanating from Jehovah himself more immediately than in the case of any one who is merely a man;—we cannot but regard even the sufferings and death of such a Being as having the most stupendous claims to our gratitude and love. But what shall we think of the love of Jehovah himself, who took this mode of uniting himself to human nature, and whose love it was, animating the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, even while this was yet not wholly glorified, that prompted the extraordinary works and sufferings which the Lord Jesus Christ, considered as this compound Being, underwent? And when we know that by these means a work of redemption was accomplished for us; when we know that salvation, which would otherwise have been for ever impossible to us, was placed within our reach; when we know that the Lord, as the Great Friend of man, has by this interference bestowed on man the power of being *his* Friend also, and is desirous to be conjoined to him in that character; how ought we to accept the proffered benefits, to admit the divine interference in our behalf to become effectual, and to aspire to the high privilege of becoming of the number of the Lord’s friends indeed, by complying with the condition

which he has annexed to it ; "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you." [John xv. 14.]

III. But I must proceed finally to prove, that there is a more exalted sense belonging to the blood of Jesus Christ : *That, when spoken of by the Lord himself in the gospels, his blood is properly to be understood in a spiritual manner ; and that then it never signifies his death and sufferings ; but the communications of his Holy Spirit proceeding from his Glorified Humanity, to convey spiritual life, and thus salvation, to mankind.*

As already noticed, the Lord Jesus Christ never speaks of his blood, without speaking of his flesh at the same time : and though the *blood* alone, by a very easy metonymy, may be mentioned to express *death*, because violent deaths are commonly accompanied with the shedding of blood, it is impossible that *death* can be what is signified by the mention of *flesh*, or of *flesh and blood* in conjunction. It is indeed commonly supposed, that the Lord's flesh and blood in the Holy Supper, which he gives to be representatively eaten and drunk under the types of bread and wine, are merely given to express his death, and as memorials of it. But how is this strictly applicable to his long discourse with the Jews respecting his flesh and blood, in the sixth chapter of John ? After calling himself the bread of life, and contrasting this bread with the manna which the ancient Jews, who were dead, had eaten in the wilderness, he says [ver. 50], "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." He then proceeds thus [ver. 51] : "I am the living bread which came down from heaven : If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever : and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." The record proceeds : "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat ? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life : and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my drink is blood indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father had sent me, and I live by



the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever" [John vi. 52—58]. Evidently, the Lord is here speaking in parables, or in enigmatic sayings: and it is no wonder that people of such gross perceptions as the Jews should cavil about it and say, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" which question of theirs, I will take upon me to say, receives no satisfactory answer in the doctrines commonly prevailing among Christians at the present day. How do those doctrines at all explain what the Lord means when He says, "He that *eateth* me, shall live by me?" Can it possibly relate to his death upon the cross? Can faith in his death be what He here teaches by speaking of the necessity of *eating his flesh* and *drinking his blood*,—yea of *eating himself*? If we admit that, by very harsh figures, to eat and drink *may* signify to have faith, and his flesh and blood, yea, himself, *may* mean his death by crucifixion, none can feel satisfied with such a forced explanation: all must be disposed to think, that the proper signification must be more in harmony with the expressions. But the mystery is easily cleared up, when we are aware, (what has generally, and for many ages past, been entirely overlooked,) that the Lord was continually in the practice of couching his divine and spiritual meaning in terms borrowed from the objects of outward nature; not, however, in an arbitrary manner, but agreeably to a certain fixed analogy or correspondence established from creation between the objects of the world of matter and those of the world of mind, or between the existences of the natural and those of the spiritual world; which are so formed, that there is no spiritual existence whatever which has not its proper type and representative in the world of nature. Whenever, therefore, the Lord speaks of his flesh and blood, he refers to the two essential principles which constitute his divine frame, as flesh and blood constitute that of man; and we have seen, in our third Lecture, that these are his Divine Love and Wisdom, or Goodness and Truth. Nothing else enters into the pure Essence of Deity: and nothing else can constitute the interior essence of the human mind, if renewed, and prepared to receive

and enjoy God. Hence it is, when the Lord speaks of his flesh and blood, that he speaks of them as being the proper food of human souls :—"Except ye *eat* my flesh, and *drink* my blood, ye have no life in you,"—that is, no spiritual life,—nothing that can qualify the soul to live in heaven. That the Lord did not mean the flesh and blood of his natural body, is evident from his answer to the murmuring Jews and short sighted disciples. The former said, as we have noticed, "Can this man give us his flesh to eat;"—and the latter, [John vi. 60], "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" But He presently explained himself by adding, "It is the *spirit* that quickeneth; the *flesh* profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit* and they are *life*." When the Lord thus said that the natural *flesh* profiteth nothing, He of course meant the same respecting the natural blood: He therefore directs us to look for the *spiritual* meaning of his words: and in the spiritual meaning, He evidently intends, by *flesh* and *blood*, the most essential constituents of his own nature, which Scripture and reason alike testify to be, Love and Wisdom, or Goodness and Truth.

This is the most proper signification of "the blood of the Lamb" in the passage which I have taken as a text for this Lecture. As noticed in our second Lecture on Redemption, the word there translated "*redeemed*," properly means *purchased*:—"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast purchased us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." By the blood of the Lamb, by which man is purchased and saved, is meant, in the purely spiritual sense, the Divine Truth flowing from the Lord's Glorified Humanity, and offered for the quickening of man, and the renewing of him to spiritual life. This is received by us, when we believe his Word, attain a right understanding of it, allow it to purify our hearts, and make it the director of our lives. It is a pure gift of the Lord's divine bounty, and, when accepted by us, we are bound, we are purchased by it, to his service. Had He not assumed our nature, and died or been slain for us, this reception of the truth and life of his Word would forever have remained beyond our reach; but these being, through the glorification of his Human-

ity, to which his death was an indispensable preliminary, thus presented to us in a form which we can apprehend, we may now do, what Adam after the fall was incapable of, "put forth our hand unto the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." In its highest reference, the tree of life is the Lord himself, and its fruits, the heavenly graces of faith and charity of which He is the Author: and these, in the accommodated form of the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ,—of the divine goodness and truth proceeding from his Human Nature, glorified or rendered Divine, are offered to the acceptance of the whole human race. Whatever the varieties of man's state, character, and attainments, the graces of salvation are made free to all. He hath purchased all by his blood, "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Now let me ask you, my friends and brethren, whether this is not a rational, and, what is of more importance, a Scriptural view of the subject? I am sure most of you will allow it to be more rational than any other that is taught in the present day: and I am satisfied, if you lay aside pre-conceived notions and search the Scriptures with candour, you will discover that it is more Scriptural also. Where do you find one word in the Scriptures respecting one Divine Person dying in inexpressible tortures to appease the wrath of another Divine Person, who would consent to be reconciled on no other conditions? I protest, if I may say it without offence, that I am quite astonished how such a persuasion ever entered the human imagination: dark, and gloomy, and destitute of all light of intelligence, must that mind have been, which first conceived so monstrous a supposition;—a supposition which clearly sets up two, not Divine Persons only, but Divine Beings, of contradictory natures; and which assigns to the first of these Beings a nature totally opposite to that which must essentially belong to the great and gracious Father of the universe. And my astonishment is increased that the inventor of this notion should have fancied that he found it in the Bible, in which, most assuredly, not a trace of it exists. The doctrine of salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ is indeed declared in the Bible: but will any, for the sake of maintaining this doctrine, adhere to the prepos-

terous form, as just recited, in which it is commonly presented, when the real Scripture doctrine of Salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, requires, as we have seen, no such melancholy inconsistencies to account for and uphold it? Jesus Christ did indeed suffer for us, yea, instead of us, because otherwise we must have perished eternally: and He did thereby effect for us an atonement, as we shall see in our next Lecture but one: But He did not undergo this suffering as a punishment inflicted upon Him by another Divine Person, as a commutation for our eternal punishment, but because, as we have seen, his Humanity could not otherwise be glorified; and, without this He could not have given his flesh and blood to us to eat and drink;—could not have imparted, by his Holy Spirit, for the nourishment of our souls, the blessed communications of his divine love and wisdom, his grace and mercy. These are extended to us, because He glorified his Humanity, which could not have been accomplished, but through its sufferings and death. Thus, adored be his infinite mercy, “by his stripes we are healed:” He, as to his Humanity, has been “made perfect through sufferings:” and thus He is “become the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey Him.”

## LECTURE XVII.

**THE MEDIATION AND INTERCESSION OF JESUS CHRIST: IN WHAT THOSE OFFICES CONSIST; AND HOW THEY ARE IN AGREEMENT WITH HIS SUPREME DIVINITY, AND WITH THE ABSOLUTE UNITY OF THE DIVINE PERSON AND ESSENCE.**

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1 TIM. ii. 5, and HEB. vii. 25.

*“ There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.”*

*“ Wherefore he is able, also, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”*

THE Lectures which I have now for some time been engaged in delivering upon some of the most important doctrines of what we believe to be the True Christian Religion, are intended, as I have before remarked, to show that a system of religion is now existing in the world, which is free from the contradictions, either of Scripture or Reason, that attach to all the systems of doctrine commonly upheld, and which thus renders Christianity itself invulnerable to the cavils and objections of the Sceptic or the Infidel. Who can wonder that erroneous opinions should still obscure the transparent beauty of the pure doctrines of the Word of God, when it is remembered that, only about three hundred years ago, the light of Divine Truth was all but entirely extinct through the whole Christian world? At that period, all the western part of Christendom was sunk in the errors of the Roman Catholic Church in its deepest state of darkness: while the Greek Church, which occupied the eastern portion of the professedly Christian world, had, in a manner, scorned to be outdone by her western rival, and had added an equal proportion of corruptions and superstitions to the holy fabric of the gospel. At a very early period indeed, the love of domination that true man of sin

of the Apostle Paul and of Daniel,—the desire to make the sanctities of religion the means of promoting the power and aggrandizement of the priesthood, infused its defiling influence into the institutions of Christianity: and though the bishops of Rome, being placed under circumstances peculiarly favourable to the advancement of such projects, succeeded far beyond any others in their attempts to extend their authority, and subdue both the souls and bodies of men to their sway, they only accomplished more perfectly, what had become the great aim and object of the hierarchy in general. Throughout all Christendom, almost every bishop, and, in fact, almost every monk and priest, lorded it at will over God's heritage, and became, each in his place, an absolute pope, as far as his sphere extended. Such was the state of ecclesiastical authority in the Christian world during many centuries: and it is by no means a matter of wonder, when such corrupt principles reigned at what ought to be the fountain-head of spiritual intelligence, if spiritual intelligence, or intelligence on spiritual subjects, almost disappeared from the earth; and if doctrines, as remote from the pure truth of the Word of God, as the desire of obtaining rule by means of the sanctities of religion is from its spirit of heavenly love, were gradually introduced, accepted, and confirmed. By degrees, also, the Scriptures themselves were withdrawn from the hands of the people, and, in numberless instances, were scarcely known even to the priests themselves. Such was the state of things at the period of the Reformation: where, then, as I have remarked in a former Lecture, is the wonder, that the leaders of that great work, superior as they were to the general intelligence of their times, while they cleared away a multitude of the grosser corruptions of a practical nature, should have retained many of the doctrinal errors which had been introduced during the ages of darkness? Where is even the wonder, if, in their desire to separate their followers as decisively as possible from the adherents of the old religion, they should, in some instances, even have introduced new errors, to form such points of separation? Is it at all extraordinary, when they performed the most important work of bringing the Word of God into general use, after it had been so long neglected and almost forgotten, if they themselves did not at once discover the truths which it delivers on some

points, and even in matters of the utmost moment? And is it beyond measure surprising, if, in times like the present, when a change appears actually to have taken place in the human mind itself,—when, on all other subjects, there is so remarkable an increase in knowledge and intelligence,—when men are no longer disposed to acquiesce, as heretofore, in a blind faith which is not to be submitted to the examination of the understanding,—when numbers, in consequence, are becoming Deists and Atheists, and are active in increasing their ranks by calling attention to the inconsistencies in the prevailing systems of theology; is it, I say, in such a crisis, a thing beyond measure surprising, if the Divine Providence of the Lord, knowing that the general rejection of Revealed Religion would be fatal to the eternal happiness of man, and even, perhaps, to the continuance of the species on this globe, should, by such means as Divine Wisdom sees fit, provide for the introduction of a system of doctrine, in which the True Christian Religion should be restored in its purity, the errors, though long accumulated, of human invention, should be done away, and the consistency of Divine Revelation with itself, and of its doctrines with sound and elevated reason, should be seen and established?

I offer these considerations, my friends and brethren, by way of accounting for that which might otherwise appear extraordinary. We all have honest prejudices in behalf of the opinions in which we have been educated; and when, in addition, we have entered warmly into the profession of them at adult age, we are apt to feel hurt when doubts are suggested as to their truth. Novelty, again, in religious points, is usually considered as synonymous with error. Yet I trust the suggestions I have offered will be deemed sufficient to show, that it is possible for religious opinions to be old, and to have prevailed for a long time, and yet not to be true; or to be new, at least in appearance, and from having been long lost sight of, and yet not to be false. And as we wish to submit the doctrines which we believe to be those of the True Christian Religion with all possible respect for the feelings of those who at present think differently, I trust that I shall continue to receive the candid attention of all who feel an interest in such momentous inquiries.

The subjects which we have considered in this second branch of our Lectures, have been, the Redemption of Jesus Christ, as properly consisting in the removal from man of the preponderating power of Hell; The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; and the Illustration it receives from the Sacrifices of the Levitical Law; and, Salvation by the Blood of Jesus Christ. And the subject of our Lecture of this evening is to be, *The Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ; in what those offices consist; and how they are in agreement with his Supreme Divinity, and with the Absolute Unity of the Divine Person and Essence.*

As I stated in our last Lecture respecting the Doctrine of Salvation by the Blood of Jesus Christ, so I must observe now respecting that of his Mediation and Intercession. No doctrine is more unequivocally declared in Scripture; and though those terms themselves do not often occur, the things intended by them are assumed as realities throughout the New Testament. Yet, certainly, whatever is meant by them in the Scriptures, the manner in which they are commonly presented by theological writers and popular preachers, is such as very greatly to embarrass the minds of those who either believe in the absolute unity of God, or in heart acknowledge the supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ: and still more, when either or both of these truths are accompanied with an entire conviction of the pure benevolence of the Divine Nature. *These* truths, also, are agreeable to all genuine Reason; all, therefore, who are convinced that no doctrines revealed from heaven can be at variance with such as are seen to be in agreement with genuine Reason, cannot but be staggered in their views on this subject, when they hear the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ dwelt upon in the manner in which they are commonly presented, and when this is declared to be the manner in which they are revealed in the Word of God. With whom is Jesus chiefly supposed to mediate and intercede,—with man, or with God? Few seem ever to think of his interceding on the part of God with man; nothing is in general dwelt upon, but his intercession for man with God. And what does this suppose, but that God is estranged from man, views him with anger and wrath, and desires to take vengeance on him for his



delinquencies, and to consign him to eternal ruin ; and that He is only withheld from doing so by the intervention of his Son, who pleads before Him his own merits and sufferings, and so awakening the Father's paternal tenderness, not for his created children but for his own only-begotten Son, induces Him to pardon those for whom his Son, in this way, intercedes ? It cannot be denied that this is the way in which the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ are usually affirmed to be exercised : and how is such a representation likely to act, in reconciling, or otherwise, the Deist, to those Scriptures, as a divine revelation which, as he is informed, present one of their principal doctrines under such an aspect as this ? Is the Infidel likely, or otherwise, to be deprived of his weapons for assaulting the Christian's belief in the Word of God as truly his Word, when he is assured that this is the form in which it exhibits a doctrine, accounted as one of the most essential of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel,—that of the Mediation and Intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ ? I am not unacquainted with the efforts which have been made, with the best intentions, to combine the doctrine of divine wrath with that of divine love, and to show that, in Deity, both are of such a nature as to harmonize with each other : but certainly, when the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ are insisted on, in the manner just stated, all the love which is exhibited is confined to the Intercessor,—the Son,—and no other love is displayed in the Being interceded with—the Father,—but love for his Son properly so called,—none for his rational creatures who derive their relationship solely from having been called by Him into existence, and framed in his image and likeness. It is only through love for his Only-begotten Son, and compassion for *his* sufferings, and as moved by *his* love to mankind, and by his passionate entreaties in their behalf, that the Father consents to be reconciled at all. But what are the feelings thus ascribed to the Fountain of Deity but such as are of the most grossly natural and merely carnal description ? The love of a parent for his child is, indeed, a most amiable affection, yet it is an affection of the *natural* man, which, consequently, no human being is naturally without : to be destitute of it, then, is an argument of the most extreme depravity. Therefore the

Apostle, in describing the excess of wickedness which prevailed among mankind at the time of the Lord's first advent [Rom. 1. 31], and the similar depravity which, he states, would prevail in "the last days," or at the time of the Lord's second advent [2 Tim. iii. 3], mentions, as one of the grand characteristic marks of such a state, that they were, and would be, "without natural affection; where the term employed in the original is that which signifies the peculiarly powerful and tender love, which naturally exists between parents and children, especially on the part of the parents. This *natural* affection in human beings is common to them with animals, and is not at all stronger than we continually behold it in *them*; and human beings, we see, are sometimes without it (never, indeed, by nature, but often through all-engrossing selfishness and the pursuit of sinful lusts); whereas animals never are. To possess it, then, even in the most powerful degree, does not, alone, raise a human being to the rank of a man; but to want it, sinks him below the brutes. What then should we think of a being in human form, in whom this was the only amiable feeling; who loved his children, but who loved neither man nor animal beside; and who never would act with kindness—with anything short of extreme harshness—to any, when once they had offended him, except at the entreaty of a favorite child? Should we not say of such a person, that even his love of his child was only a form of his all-engrossing love of himself, and thus that no real principle of benevolence existed in his character?

Some, perhaps, may not be aware, though the fact is obvious, in regard to persons who are wholly engrossed by self-love, and with whom, consequently, the promotion of their own authority, influence, and interest, is the only object of pursuit, that when they love their children, it is only because they identify them with themselves. They view themselves in them, and think of them altogether as part of themselves; and therefore they love them. But let the children of such parents, when they grow up, act in a way that frustrate their selfish views respecting them,—as, for instance, by disposing of themselves in marriage in such a manner as to defeat the schemes of their parents for the aggrandizement of their family,—and how speedily does such paren-

tal love discover its true nature, as nothing but a form of the love of self, by changing into inexorable resentment! The essence of all genuine love, and especially of the Divine Love, is beautifully defined, in the doctrines which we regard as those of the True Christian religion, to consist in loving others, who are without, or quite distinct from, oneself, in desiring to be one with them, and to make them happy from oneself: but, evidently, there is nothing but the opposite of this,—thus, nothing but what is essentially contrary to Divine Love,—in a principle, which only loves another, not as distinct from itself, put as part of itself,—thus in the parent, who only loves his child, because he views himself in it. There is then little to admire or to love in a person, whose affection for his offspring, extending no further, is only the love of himself. It is then a principle which allies him with hell, but does not at all tend to associate him with heaven.

I have here only hinted at the parallel in view. The whole might be easily carried much further, but on account of the sanctity of the subject, in itself, of the Lord's Mediation and Intercession, I forbear to expose, more minutely, the misrepresentations attached to it,—especially as we shall have to advert to kindred topics in a subsequent Lecture. I will only ask, again, what would be our opinion of a human being—of a sovereign, suppose, who had the destinies of all the inhabitants of an immense empire in his hands,—who loved himself in his immediate offspring, but loved no one else; and who, though he abstained from devoting, as he purposed, all his people to destruction, only did so at the intreaty of a darling son; whilst even his son was unable to urge his “intercession” with effect, till he had caused to be inflicted on himself all that his incensed parent had purposed to inflict on all his subjects; and then excited the paternal compassion for *himself*, and obtained compliance with his intreaties for *them*, by displaying his bleeding wounds?

Brethren, is not this an exact picture of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ with *his* Father, as commonly presented in the doctrines of the day? But do you recognise in it a just portrait of Him, who is justly denominated “the Father of mercies? Does it acknowledge in Him any love but self-love, which is most essentially infernal? Does it ascribe to Him

a particle of truly Divine love, according to the indisputable definition of it just recited? If not, can it be a just representation of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ, as the doctrine is revealed in the Scriptures of Truth? And if the Scriptures of Truth, so accounted, did in reality exhibit the subject as thus generally taught, would there not be some excuse for the Sceptic who should question their right to that title, and refuse to accept them as a Divine Revelation? If then a view of the subject has been opened among mankind which is quite free from every taint of such merely carnal notions,—which adores the Eternal Father as truly “the Father of mercies,”—which fully clears the Word of God from countenancing such incredibilities of perversion, and restores it to its true dignity as a revelation of Eternal Truth;—is it not supremely important that it should be listened to with attention and candour, and allowed to go forward on its elevated mission, of arresting the desolating progress of Infidelity in the world, and establishing the believers in Christianity in a position, where no shafts drawn from the arsenals of true reason can be aimed against their faith, and where all other weapons must fall blunted to the ground?

I have deemed it needless to say anything to demonstrate, that such a view of the doctrine of Mediation and Intercession as we have noticed, being the view of it which is presented in the prevailing systems of theology, is inconsistent, both with the belief of the Absolute Unity of the Divine Person and Essence, and with that of the Supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; for that which is obvious of itself, cannot be made more so by any demonstration. And what can be more obvious of itself, than that, as exhibited in the customary doctrine, the Son who intercedes, and the Father to whom his intercession is directed,—the Son who, filled with love for mankind, solicits forgiveness for them, and the Father who, incensed against them, only forgives them at the Son’s intreaty,—the Son who, having voluntarily submitted to the death and torments decreed against transgressing man, pleads the merits of his sufferings with his Father to move him to have mercy, and the Father, whose justice and wrath are such as make it impossible for him to show mercy till the penalties they demand of sinning man have

been inflicted on his innocent Son:—I say, what can be more self-evident, than that the Father and Son, thus represented, are not one, but two completely distinct Beings, the attributes of the one being the antipodes of those of the other, and whom, therefore, it would be a contradiction in terms to designate as together one God, in whom is an absolute Unity of Essence? Still less, if less be possible, can they be One in Person. It is true, that the advocates of this system acknowledge, and insist, that they are *not* one in Person. We have proved, in former Lectures, that they *are*; but, waiving this for the present, the upholders of the doctrine in question maintain, that, though two Persons, Supreme Divinity belongs to them both. But is it not here, again, self-evident, and therefore a fact which needs no other demonstration to prove it, that he who supplicates and intreats, and who submits to such extremities of suffering to obtain a favorable hearing to his intercessions, cannot, if a Divine Person at all, be a God of the same rank as He, to whom the intercessions are made, and to conciliate whom the sufferings are undergone and pleaded? To admit such a notion, we must have recourse, with the ancient Polytheists, to the imagination of *degrees* of Divinity,—of lesser and greater Deities; which imagination, totally excluding the idea of Infinity, abolishes the notion of real or absolute Divinity altogether.

Again, then, we see, that such a mode of representing the Mediation and Intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot possibly be the true one. If it could be proved to be the mode in which it is set forth in the Scriptures, this would only prove the Scriptures to be at variance, not merely with Reason, but with themselves; for the doctrine of the Supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, which it so irreconcilably impugns, is demonstrably a doctrine of the Scriptures; and that of the Absolute Unity of the Divine Essence and Person, which it diametrically contradicts, is equally a doctrine of Revelation and of Reason. Nothing then can be more necessary, to the vindication of the Bible and the stability of the Christian Religion, than the view presented by the True Christian Religion of the nature of the Lord's Mediation and Intercession should be known, harmonizing, as it does, both with Reason and with

Revelation, and affording, to the sincere and consistent disciples of both, all that is required for their satisfaction.

The true doctrine, then, of the Mediation of Jesus Christ, is no other than that which was delivered, without expressly calling it by that name, in our Lecture on *The Reasonableness, as well as Scripture Evidence, of the important truth, that the Assumption of Humanity into God, instead of limiting the Divine Infinity and Omnipotence, afforded the means of their more full Manifestation and Exercise.* There could be no communication between God, incomprehensible, to finite apprehensions and capacities, as, in his Infinite Essence, He must necessarily be,—and man, a creature, and especially as a fallen creature, at all,—had not God put forth, from “the beginning,” his WORD, and had not this WORD, in the fulness of time, been “made flesh;” and it is the Word made flesh, and glorified, of the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ, not as a separate Deity, but as the Manifested Form of the Essential Divinity, truly One Person with the Father as the body of man is one person with his soul, that is the Mediator; and his mediation consists, not in supplicating the Father in man’s behalf, but in bringing down saving influences and graces from God to man, and opening to man a way of access to his God.

Allow me, instead of repeating the same thing in different words, to recite two or three short passages from the Lecture just referred to, in which the doctrine is placed, I humbly apprehend, in the light of genuine truth.

“In order that the soul of man may exercise an operation, and express its sentiments, in the natural world, it must be invested with the natural organs of speech and action, which are supplied to its use by the natural body. It must, in fact, be clothed over with an encompassing veil, as a *medium* for bringing its sentiments, feelings, and exertions, within the apprehension of other beings in a natural state of existence. So, it may easily be seen, must the Father of spirits, the Infinite and Eternal, cloth Himself in like manner with something answering to a human body, before his life, and especially his divine perfections, can be brought into a form, capable of being received, and in any degree apprehended, either by angels or men.”

"The Word of the Lord which made the heavens, is the Divine Truth, proceeding as a spiritual emanation from Him. That it does not signify a mere word spoken, is evident from the manner in which the same thing is stated in the beginning of John: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—By him were all things made, and without him was not any thing made which was made.' This evidently implies, that the Word by which were made the heavens and all things, was not a mere speech or command, which was ended as soon as uttered, but was a substantial (not material) emanation from the inmost of Deity, conveying divine things into a sphere below their origin, and thus producing the wonders of creation and imparting life, both natural and spiritual, to the things created; according to what is said in the same passage of John; 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.' Thus this emanating life was, in a manner, to the Divine Essence, what the body of man is to his soul,—the *medium* by which the soul makes itself apprehensible, and produces effects, in a sphere below that in which itself is stationed."

Now "if the Word by which the heavens were made was not, as we have seen in former Lectures, a Divine Person separate from the Divine Essence, but an emanation, of the nature, comparatively, of a Divine Body, with which God encompassed Himself to apply Himself to the necessities of his creatures before the time arrived for his actual assumption of Humanity, is there the least reason to suppose that the Word made flesh is any more a separate Being, or can be any other than the Manifested Form of the One Divine Essence, put forth in such a manner as to meet the wants of man when sunk almost entirely into the natural state of existence, and in imminent danger of perishing altogether?" We find from the Scripture-records, as shown in the Lecture which I am quoting, "that as man passed through various states of declension, God followed him with new dispensations of truth and grace, and varied manifestations of his own name and nature. And finally, when the fulness of time had arrived, or when man had descended into such a state as to render all other modes of operation for his welfare in-

effectual,—to carry on and complete the grand scheme of Divine Mercy, ‘the Word was made flesh,’—the Divine Essence clothed itself with humanity such as it is with men in the world; and, having perfectly purified and glorified the humanity assumed, the Divinity united it to itself, as a *Medium* for conveying the influences of his love and wisdom to man in a form perfectly adapted to his state.” And this is what the Apostle teaches in the first portion of our text, when he says, “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.” Why does he here use a mode of expression which he employs nowhere else, and say, “the *Man* Christ Jesus?” To instruct us, that it is as to his Human Nature, and not as to his essentially Divine Nature, that Jesus Christ is the Mediator: in other words, that it is as to his Divine Humanity, and not as to his Essential Divinity, that he sustains this office; and few will affirm that his Humanity is a distinct person by itself; and if not, the Mediation of Jesus Christ must be exercised according to the manner in which a man’s body mediates, or acts as a medium of communication, between his soul and persons and things around him,—not after the manner in which one person mediates, or acts as a medium, between two other parties.

Thus viewed, then, we see, there is nothing in the doctrine of the Mediation of Jesus Christ which in the least militates against the all important doctrine of the Absolute Unity of the Godhead, both in Essence and in Person. And it is equally in harmony with,—in fact, it assumes or supposes,—that other fundamental truth, that Love is the primary essential of the Divine Nature.

We will illustrate this part of the subject by adverting once again to the sacrifices of the Levitical law. Requesting, then, that what was offered in regard to the Levitical Sacrifices in our Lecture respecting them may be borne in mind, allow me to offer an explanation of a few other particulars connected with them. As we have seen, in that Lecture, that those sacrifices, rightly understood, eminently illustrate the true nature of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so do they equally throw light on that of his Mediation.

In reference to the whole burnt offerings, which, as we have



seen, represent the dedication of the whole man to the Lord, it is directed [Lev. i. 5], that "the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar." The altar, according to the doctrines which we accept as those of the true Christian religion, as being a sort of table on which the things offered in sacrifice were presented by the offerer, and were received, as it were, by the Lord, was representative of that to which man looks, and on which he relies, for acceptance by the Lord, and from which the Lord, on his part, graciously accepts the worship which he offers; and this is, and can be, no other than the Lord's Divine Love. Thus, also, the altar is representative of the Lord's Divine Humanity, it being only in, and by, the Lord's Divine Humanity, that man can have any approach to, or acceptance with, the infinitely pure and holy God: or, to speak, perhaps, more distinctly, the altar, on which the sacrifices were offered and received, is an emblem of the Lord's Divine Love, as manifested, and accommodated to man's apprehension, in his Divine Humanity. According to which view of the subject, it must be obvious, that although the New Church sees to be utterly groundless the notions about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as consisting in his death on the cross, viewed as the punishment for man's sins literally inflicted on Him in the way of positive substitution; yet the New Church, more than any other body of professing Christians, has most exalted ideas of the mercy displayed, and the inestimable benefits conferred on man, in the assumption of Humanity by Jehovah in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; and in the glorification of the Humanity so assumed,—its perfect assimilation to the Essential Divinity and union therewith, in which, really and truly, as we have seen, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ consisted. It was thus that the Divine Love condescended to human infirmity,—that the Infinite God made himself accessible to, and conceivable by, finite and fallen man, both enabling man to approach him with a reasonable and acceptable service,—the service of true penitence and humble love,—and putting himself in the attitude towards man of forgiveness and acceptance. How then, thus viewing Him, ought our hearts ever to overflow with love and adoration towards this all-gracious and Saviour-God! how ought

we to bring our bullock or our sheep—the affections of innocence and charity, as adapted both to the external and to the internal man, and slaughter it—or pour out its blood,—before the Lord, and cause the priests, Aaron's sons, to bring the blood, and sprinkle it upon the altar round about!

The priests, Aaron's sons, are, again, representatives of the Lord as to his divine love, but as to his divine love as dwelling in the interiors of man himself, or as abiding in man by his Spirit. For nothing can possibly approach the Lord for man, minister for him, as it were, in his worship, and cause his imperfect endeavours to serve the Lord aright to be accepted, but what is *of* the Lord himself, yea, what *is* the Lord himself as dwelling in man. No doubt the operation or mediation of the priests, in the sacrifices presented by the children of Israel, represented exactly what is spoken of by the Apostle Paul, when he says [Rom. viii. 26, 27], "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." No doubt the office of the Jewish priests, in acting as mediums, when sacrifices were presented, and on other occasions, between the people and the Lord, represented the real "work of the Spirit," as thus described by the Apostle—the presentation of man's desires, in worship, to the Lord, by the Lord himself as dwelling in man: and the Lord, regarded as dwelling in man or in any finite subject, conforming him to his own will, and rendering him such as his infinite holiness can accept with complacency, is what the Scripture calls the Holy Spirit. That which essentially mediates with man, and intercedes in his behalf, is the Lord's own divine love. It is obvious, that it can be nothing but divine love in the Lord from which man can be received, forgiven, and have his imperfect endeavours accepted, by Him. It is the Lord's own love that makes excuses for him, as it were, overlooks and supplies his short comings, mitigates, so to speak, the rigour of the requirements of the Divine Truth, which, if separated from Divine Love, would condemn all, and accepts

sincerity instead of perfection. This office and operation of the Lord's divine love, in and for man, is what is represented by the mediation of the priests, and what they did for the offerer, in the presenting of sacrifices.

The first thing that the priests did was, to "bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar." Here again would be ample opportunity of contrasting what is really said about sacrifices, with the notions commonly entertained of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and comparing what is divinely said of the blood of the sacrifices with what is popularly said about the blood of Christ; but we treated of this sufficiently in our last Lecture.

Blood, as was then shown, is constantly mentioned in the Holy Word as a symbol of Divine Truth. The blood here, being that of the sacrifices, which represented the worship of the Lord from heavenly affections and true perceptions received by man from Him, must signify the Divine Truth as abiding in the mind of the worshipper. Divine Truth is the medium by which all the regeneration of man is effected, which consists in his purification from evils, and in the implantation in his heart and mind of genuine principles of goodness and truth by the Lord. It is Divine Truth which instructs man as to the existence and person, the will and works, of the Lord, by whom he is to be saved,—that teaches him what is good and right, and how he is to live that he may obtain salvation; and when he has acquired a knowledge of these things, and not before, the genuine affection or love for the good with which he is thus made acquainted can be implanted in his breast, and thus his regeneration may proceed to completion. The completion of, at least, some decisive state in the regenerative process, is what was represented by those sacrifices called burnt offerings, in which the whole of the sacrifice was burnt upon the altar; and, finally, the completion of the regeneration of the whole man; whence, as we showed in our two Lectures upon the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, they represented, in their highest signification, the completion of the glorification of his Humanity. Regeneration is completed as to the whole, and as to the more general grand degrees or stages of it, when a perfect union is effected, in the

mind, of goodness and truth ; when what man knows, and sees, he equally loves, and delights to exhibit in his actions. And a perfect or entire union of truth with goodness is what is represented by the command, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice upon the altar round about—the altar signifying Divine Good. When a union is effected, in the mind, of goodness and truth, there is effected, at the same time, the conjunction of man with the Lord ; which also is represented by the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice round about the altar—the altar, in this application denoting the Lord as to his Divine Love in his Divine Humanity. The truth, indeed, which man receives from the Lord, and which he learns originally by means of the Holy Word, is never properly his own, any more than the Holy Word itself is his own. It is *of* the Lord, with, and in him : and when he has allowed it to effect the purposes for which it is graciously bestowed, he heartily ascribes it all to its Divine Source, and finds it made the medium, through the Lord's divine goodness, of effecting a conjunction between his soul and the Lord. The priests—the Lord in him as to his Divine Love,—sprinkle the blood—apply and ascribe the Divine Truth he had received,—upon the altar round about—to the Lord as to his Divine Good in his Divine Humanity : and thus full conjunction is effected, both of the man himself and the Lord, and of truth and goodness from the Lord in the man's own mind.

It is observable, that the priests are not simply designated as priests, but are also called “Aaron's sons,” or “the sons of Aaron the priest.” The priests, as we have just seen, are representatives of the Lord as to his Divine Love, but considered more particularly as dwelling in man. On this account, all the actual presentation of the sacrifice upon the altar was performed by the priests : the offerer himself only executed the preparatory operations,—the slaying of the animal, the flaying of it, and the cutting of it into its pieces : the sprinkling of the blood, the placing of all the parts of the sacrifice in due order on the altar, and the burning of it, were performed by the priests ; which was to represent, that it is only from the activity of the Lord, as dwelling in man by his Spirit, that ~~any~~ real worship can be offered to Him ; and the priests represent the Lord as to his

Divine Love, because it is only the Lord's Divine Love that intercedes for man,—that draws forth that which is in him from the Lord, by virtue of which he is capable, in any way, of really worshipping his God and Saviour,—that mitigates the requirements of strict Divine Truth (from a mistaken apprehension of which have originated the common notions about the terrors of the law and its inexorable nature), overlooks his imperfections, and accepts his humble, if sincere, endeavors. Though this is the office of the Lord's Divine Love, that principle, in Him, is, nevertheless, not Love alone, but Love in union with Truth. Divine Love, could it exist alone, would draw all to heaven without distinction; even hell would be emptied of its inhabitants, and they would all be transferred into heaven, were it possible for Divine Love to exist, and act alone. But though the infinite ardour and tenderness of Divine Love would draw all to heaven, it cannot alone, qualify them to exist there. Could evil, and evil spirits—inferentials in whom evil is the reigning principle and continually lusts to destroy,—be admitted among the angels, it is easy to see that confusion and destruction must be the inevitable consequence. To prepare any beings to exist in heaven, not only must Love draw them, but Truth must purify them, must remove their evils from them, and so make them actual recipients of the Lord's Divine Love. On the other hand, could truth exist in the Lord, and act, alone, even the angels would be banished from heaven. No finite creature can possibly come up to the standard of perfection pointed at by pure Divine Truth. Looking even at the highest created existences from this principle, as Job says of the Lord, "He chargeth his angels with folly;" so that, if this could exist and act alone, none could find refuge anywhere but in hell. Therefore, in the Lord, Love and Truth are united, so as to be a perfect One. Truth directs the impulses of Love, and Love mitigates the rigour of Truth. Still their operations may be viewed distinctly. It is Love, unquestionably, that intercedes in the Divine Mind in behalf of man,—that performs for him the office of the priest, and causes his services to be accepted by the Lord: but it is Truth, in union with Love, that so purifies him from evil, as to make him capable, in any manner, of being

principled in good, and of worshipping the Lord from the good thus received from Him. To express both, the priests are continually called "Aaron's sons," or "the sons of Aaron the priest;" the term *sons*, in the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, always having relation to the principle of truth, and *priests* always denoting, in that sense, goodness or love.

I know not whether these ideas and interpretations may carry conviction to those to whom they are new, but, rightly understood and appreciated, they tend, as it appears to me, greatly to elucidate the nature, and the doctrine, of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ. That which properly intercedes for man, is the Lord's Divine Love; and that which makes man receptive of it in himself, is the Lord's Divine Truth. But in their absolute nature, as they exist in the Inmost of Deity, Divine Love is immensely too ardent and burning, and Divine Truth too dazzling and blinding, to be capable of reception by any finite beings. Therefore in order to creation itself, God veiled over the causticity and splendour of the fire of his Love which is Love in union with Wisdom, with a Medium suitable to adapt it for reception; which Medium is the Divine Logos,—*"the Word,"* which *"in the beginning was with God, and which was God,"*—by which *"all things were made, and without which was not any thing made that was made,"*—*"in which was life, which life was the light of men."* And when man had sunk so low that even the light and life of this Divine Logos could no longer reach and affect him in a saving manner, *"the Word was made flesh,"*—God invested himself with Humanity, which He glorified, deified, or assimilated in nature to, and perfectly united with, his inmost Divine Essence, so as to be One Person therewith as the body is one person with the soul. This Divine Humanity is what is properly called the Mediator; and the operation of this Divine Humanity, in restoring the communication of God with Man and of Man with God,—conveying, by the Holy Spirit thence given, saving graces from God to Man, and, by regeneration, creating man anew in the image and likeness of God,—is the work of the Lord's Mediation.

I have, as yet, scarcely adverted to any of the passages of Scripture which speak expressly of the Mediation and Interces-

sion of Jesus Christ under those names : we will complete, therefore, this discussion in another Lecture, devoted to the more direct consideration of the Scripture testimony. But, I would fain hope, the doctrine itself has already been stated with sufficient clearness, and established by sufficient evidence. A doctrine has been presented, which neither impugns the pure Love of the Father, the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ, nor the Absolute Unity of the Divine Essence and Person. It exhibits the Divine Love of our Heavenly Father as the primary principle which mediates with Him for man, without any wrath as a principle that demands a separate Mediator. It was his Love that sent forth his Logos "in the beginning," to produce recipient subjects and replenish them with his gifts. It was from his Love that, when the crisis of man's fate required, for his salvation, and even his continued existence, such an intervention, "the Word was made flesh." "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son (the Divine Humanity thus developed from the Inmost of Deity), that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." [John iii. 16]. Thus the Mediator is not a separate Person from Him who gave Him for our salvation, but is the Manifestation of Himself in a Form capable of being apprehended by those whom He came to save. "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" [John i. 18].

## LECTURE XVIII.

THE MEDIATION AND INTERCESSION OF JESUS CHRIST : IN WHAT THOSE OFFICES CONSIST ; AND HOW THEY ARE IN AGREEMENT WITH HIS SUPREME DIVINITY, AND WITH THE ABSOLUTE UNITY OF THE DIVINE PERSON AND ESSENCE. AND SCRIPTURE STATEMENTS EXPLAINED.

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1 TIM. iii. 5, and HEB. vii. 25.

*"There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."*

*"Wherefore he is able, also, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

IN our last Lecture we considered the great subject of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ, both as represented in the usual doctrines of the day, and as really constituting a doctrine of the True Christian Religion. We have been enabled, I trust, clearly to see, that, as commonly taught, the doctrine involves ideas which cannot possibly be true ; since it not only comprises the negation, and tends to destroy all idea, of the Absolute Unity of God, by the diametrical contrariety of character which it supposes to exist between the assumed first Person of the Trinity, called in Scripture the Father, and the second, called the Son, but actually divests the Father of every species of love except love for his own proper Son, and supposes even this love—the natural love of offspring—only to exist in the divine breast in its most narrow and selfish form ; whilst, although it assigns genuine divine love to the Son, displayed in the most ardent desire for man's salvation, and readiness to undertake and perform anything that can promote that great object, it strips Him of all claim to Supreme Divinity, by repre-



senting Him as unable to bestow salvation of Himself, but only to obtain the consent to it of his Father by the most urgent intreaty, and the most extraordinary, painful, and unceasing efforts to move him to compassion. Whosoever looks at the subject in any degree of the light of truth and of free rationality, cannot but see that such ideas, so far from partaking of anything spiritual, involve nothing but what is most grossly natural and carnal; and it is obvious of itself, that merely natural and carnal ideas cannot be the proper exponents of any doctrine of Divine Truth. So long, therefore, as it is believed that such a form of the doctrine of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ is that in which it is presented in the Holy Scriptures, it is impossible to wonder that there should be many, who, without being influenced, as is the case with so great a proportion of the deniers of Divine Revelation, by corrupt motives, find it difficult to believe in the Scriptures as the Word of God. Yet, without the Lord Jesus Christ there is no salvation. They who reject the Scriptures, necessarily reject all belief in the Lord Jesus Christ: and if they become confirmed in such rejection, by an immersion, as is the natural consequence, in the evils of unregenerate nature, from which none but He can deliver them, what hope can be cherished of their salvation? How anxious then should every well-disposed mind be, to assist in removing the stumbling blocks, which obstruct the way to faith in the written Word, and by consequence in the living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ! How thankful to find that while the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ is an unquestionable doctrine of the Scriptures, the real Scripture-mode of presenting the doctrine is such, as not only places no stumbling block in the way of acknowledging their divinity, but tends to establish their right to the title! And surely this may be said to be accomplished, when we are enabled to see, that according to the Scriptures, the first Essential and primary Attribute of Deity;—the Divine Love Itself, which is such that it ever burns to draw all to Itself and save them,—is that which primarily intercedes in man's behalf; so that nothing can be more opposite to truth than to imagine, that the Inmost of Deity needs to be moved to compassion by the intreaties of another; that, in union

with the Divine Truth, it has ever been engaged in providing suitable means and mediums for the salvation and happiness of mankind, and for imparting to them the aids and influences necessary for rescuing them from evil and from hell, and replenishing them with the gifts and graces in which the Lord can dwell with them; that, finally, when nothing less would suffice, Jehovah himself, as the Word or Divine Logos, assumed Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, therein wrought the work of Redemption (the nature of which has been explained in our two Lectures on that subject), and, when the Humanity was glorified, or perfectly united with the Essential Divinity as the body to the soul, communicated the Holy Spirit, which is the Divine Proceeding from the Divine Humanity, and is the Lord Himself as dwelling and operating in men and in angels. This Divine Humanity, then, of which the proper name is Jesus Christ, is, we have seen, what is termed the Mediator, as being, in conjunction with the Holy Spirit thence proceeding, the Medium by which divine aids and spiritual graces are dispensed to man, by which access is given him to God, and by which he is rescued from his evils, reformed, regenerated, and eternally saved.

That this is a just view of the Scripture-doctrine of the Mediation and Intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, has then, I cannot but hope, been sufficiently established in our last Lecture; but as we did not then very particularly examine any of the passages of the Bible in which the words "Mediation" and "Intercession" are expressly introduced, we are now to go more at large into a consideration of the Scripture-testimony on the subject.

I. The most important passage which anywhere occurs that applies the title of "Mediator" to the Lord Jesus Christ, is that which forms the first of the verses that I have read as a text, from Paul's first Epistle to Timothy; and on this I did offer a few observations in our last Lecture, which, though brief, might be sufficient to show, that this very important statement of the Apostle perfectly harmonizes with the view which was advocated in that Lecture of the Mediation of Jesus Christ. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." It has justly been observed, by theologians of

high reputation, that nothing can be more futile than to argue from this passage, as is done by Unitarians, that because the Apostle here uses the words, "the Man Christ Jesus," we are to understand Jesus Christ to be a man, and nothing more : for if he were nothing but a man, what need to speak of his manhood at all? It is said that the Mediator is "the Man Christ Jesus," not to teach that Jesus Christ is only a man, and is not God, but to teach that it is only as to his Manhood, or Human Nature, and not as to his Godhead, or essentially Divine Nature, that He is the Mediator. If it had been said "there is one Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ," the import would have been, that Jesus Christ is the Mediator as to his whole compound nature,—as to his Essential Divinity as well as his Divine Humanity : to shut out this conclusion, he is called "the *Man* Christ Jesus." The meaning is the same as when it is said (Rom. i. 3), that Jesus Christ our Lord "was made of the seed of David *according to the flesh* ;" and in another place (Rom. ix. 5), that of the Jews "*according to the flesh* Christ came." Why does the Apostle here carefully distinguish, that it was only "*according to the flesh*" that Jesus Christ our Lord came of the Jews, and of the seed of David, except to remind those to whom he was writing, that, as they well knew, he had another nature, according to which he owned no relationship either to David or any other Jew, or any mortal man ; in other words, that He had a Divine Nature, as well as a Human Nature, and that it was, and could be, only as to the originally infirm human nature inherited from the mother that he descended from the Jews and from David? This is just what He teaches Himself,—or rather, is the converse of what He teaches Himself, when He said to the Pharisees (Matt. xxii. 42—46), "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit,—(more properly, by the Spirit,—that is, in a state of inspiration) call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man (it is added) was able to answer him a word." Here by showing that no one who was literally the son of David could also be

David's Lord, He virtually denies, and was understood by the hearers to deny, that He was actually the son of David. Yet in other places it is plainly said, that He *was* the Son of David. The seemingly contradictory statements can only be reconciled by understanding that in one sense, or in one respect, He *was* the Son of David, and in another sense, or in another respect, He *was not*. And Paul solves the difficulty by making the distinction, that He was "of the seed of David *according to the flesh*,"—according to the infirm human nature taken by birth from the merely human mother; evincing, that when Jesus Himself disallows that He was David's son, and affirms, in David's own inspired language, that He was David's Lord, He means to declare that he was not the son of David, or of any man, but the Lord of all men, as to his Divine Nature, not only as to his Essential Divinity, which he calls his Father, but also as to his Divine Humanity, which is what is meant when He is called the Son of God. As has been fully explained in former Lectures, He completely put off the infirm Humanity, and put on the Divine Humanity, by the glorifying process which He passed through in the world, so that, at his resurrection and ascension, He was no longer the son of Mary, nor, consequently, in the literal sense, of David. His Humanity was then altogether Divine, wholly the Son of God; and He then, as he expresses it Himself, went to the Father from whom, as to his Divine Humanity, He came forth, together with and in that Humanity, now perfected to the very ultimates; and which thus was brought into the closest union with the Essential Divinity, so as to form therewith One Divine Person, as the body of man is in close union, and forms one person, with his soul.

Now it is this Divine Humanity, which is the Grand Medium by which all the divine operations for saving and blessing man are exerted, which the Apostle points out explicitly in our text, by the designation of "the man Christ Jesus." By "the Man Christ Jesus" he means, the Divine Humanity, viewed as distinct from the Essential Divinity, though constituting therewith One Divine Person; as man's body, though making one person with his soul, is quite distinct from it. And this, in agreement with all that was stated in our last and other preceding Lec-

tures as to the necessity of such a Medium for dispensing to man the means of grace and salvation, when man had become so immersed in the mere extremes of his natural man that the divine aids and influences, such as they existed before the Lord's incarnation, could reach him no longer, is denominated by the Apostle "the Mediator."

"Mediator" is a pure Latin word adopted into the English language, and is derived from a word which means the middle, or what is in the middle. Thus it bears exactly the same radical meaning as the word used in the original of the New Testament, which strictly signifies, *one who stands in the middle between two other persons, or things*. Hence it also bears the same metaphorical meaning as the Latin word "Mediator," and which in English is the only meaning,—that of *a person who interposes between two other parties, to accommodate their differences, or to effect their reconciliation*. Now this, as has been shown, in former Lectures, and will be further evinced when we come to consider the true nature of the Atonement effected for man by the Lord Jesus Christ, is precisely what He accomplished by assuming and glorifying the Humanity: by this, man was again brought into a state of communion, and a capacity for acceptance, with God, through the adaptation to his state of the divine aids necessary for his salvation. By this, according to that most luminous and satisfactory declaration of the Apostle [2 Cor. v. 19], "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;" wherefore, for himself and the other dispensers of the means of this new-discovered grace, the Apostle adds, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God." Christ, or the Messiah, is a name of the Lord's Divine Humanity: filled with the Spirit proceeding from which, and as instruments for extending it to others, the Apostles denominate themselves "ambassadors for Christ:" and because the operation of the Lord's Humanity consists much more truly in reconciling man to God than in reconciling God to man, the human preachers of this grace, and thus dispensers of this Spirit, beg those whom they address to receive the call, "as though God did beseech you by us;" and to be assured that it is in Christ's

place, or as speaking in his name, that they intreat them, saying, "Be ye reconciled to God." God is said to beseech them, and Christ to pray or intreat them, not as two persons, but as One; God being, as is expressly stated, in Christ, or the Essential Divinity in the Divine Humanity, as the soul in the body; and Christ, or the Divine Humanity, operating and sending the Spirit from the Essential Divinity, communicates the graces of it by its first recipients the Apostles, who are always described as sent by Christ, to all who should be converted by their preaching.

Thus, again, we see, that the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the primary and grand Medium by which the saving purposes of the Essential Divine Love are accomplished upon mankind. And it is as thus bringing man again into connexion and conjunction with his God, and removing the impediments which kept them asunder, that "the Man Christ Jesus"—the Lord as to his Divine Humanity, is denominated "the Mediator."

It may indeed be objected, that among men, one who mediates between two parties at variance is always a person distinct from both. This indeed, is true, and between men it cannot be otherwise. Yet we often use figurative language, imputing mediatory operations to certain principles in the party's own mind. If persons intimately connected unhappily fall at variance, as when a parent is offended by some misconduct on the part of his child, how common is it to say, that the offender finds a strong advocate, or a powerful mediator, in the parent's own breast! The Word of God abounds with such personifications of principles. How continually does David, in the Psalms, address his own soul, as if that were a person distinct from himself; as when he exclaims, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits;" or when he stirs up his mind to thanksgiving by saying, "Awake up, my glory"—glory being itself a figurative expression for man's better part, his spirit or mind. Now the Lord expressly warns his disciples, that He spoke in this figurative manner in all that He said to them about Himself, the Father, and the Holy Ghost, when He closes a long discourse, chiefly on those subjects, by saying, [John xvi. 25], "These things have I spoken to you in proverbs," or, as it is

given in the margin, "in parables;"—the original word denotes, enigmatical or symbolic sayings. It is in this parabolic or symbolic style that He denominates his Essential Divinity the Father, his Divine Humanity the Son, and his Divine Proceeding the Holy Spirit; and that the Apostle, in our text, calls his Divine Humanity "the Man Christ Jesus" and the "Mediator." Distinct Persons they cannot be, unless you would destroy the all-important Scripture truth, that God is one: if then they cannot be distinct Persons, which would be the same as distinct Gods, they must be distinct Principles or Essentials which, united, constitute the One God; and the application to them of personal titles and attributes must be one of the forms of that symbolic and divinely significative language which the purely divine style of writing constantly employs. It is by a very easy figure that a *Medium* is denominated a *Mediator*; and we have abundantly seen, that the Lord's Divine Humanity is the all-important Medium for dispensing saving benefits to mankind.

We have now pretty fully considered this most important of all the texts in which the title of Mediator is given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the only one which the commonly received doctrine of the Mediation of Jesus Christ attempts to adduce in its support. That doctrine represents him as pleading the merits of his death and sufferings to reconcile an angry God to sinful men; but never regards him as pleading with sinful men to reconcile them to a long-suffering, infinitely benevolent, and ever-placable God; when yet, as we have seen, this is much more like the manner in which the exercise of his mediation is represented in the Scriptures. The Apostles describe themselves as intreating men in his name, saying, "Be ye reconciled with God;" but never do they represent him as saying to God, "Be thou reconciled to men." This text then, which declares that "the Man Christ Jesus"—the Lord as to his Divine Humanity—is the "Mediator between God and Man," gives no direct countenance to the usual mode of considering his Mediatorship. Yet it is the only one which can possibly be construed into any agreement with that notion. There are in the whole, three other passages in which the Lord Jesus Christ is called a Mediator: but all of these speak of Him simply as dis-

pending benefits and mercies to men, and are totally irreconcilable with the notion of his pleading for them with God.

The first is in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. viii. 5. The Apostle, this being a subject adapted to gain the attention, and win the favour, of the Jews to whom he was writing, is showing how much more suited to our necessities, Jesus, considered as our High Priest, must be, than the merely mortal high priests under the Mosaic law. (We showed in our last in what manner the Jewish priests represented the Mediation of Jesus Christ.) For Jesus, he says, "hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Here, when Jesus is called the Mediator of a better covenant, it is evident that the meaning is, that He was the Medium or Instrument by whom such covenant was introduced and established. It is called a better covenant, to point out the superiority of the gospel, or of the Christian dispensation, over the law, or the Mosaic dispensation; and this better covenant is said to be founded upon better promises, because, under the Mosaic covenant and dispensation, nothing but prosperity and long life in the world were promised to those who observed the conditions of it; whereas "life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel." Of this better covenant then, it is here said that Jesus "is the Mediator,"—the Medium or Agent who proposed it from God, on the one part, to man on the other: and He who did this was the Lord in his Humanity;—not any second person of an imagined Trinity of three persons, "begotten before all worlds;"—not even the Eternal Logos—the Word which in the beginning was with God and was God—in his then state of existence and manifestation; but this Word when made flesh, or manifested in human nature: and the Word made flesh, we have abundantly seen in former Lectures, is the Divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But this subject, respecting Jesus as the Divine Mediator of the new covenant, will be made more clear, when we know that the title is equally given to Moses, as the human mediator of the covenant of the Law, or of the Mosaic dispensation. Yet this is expressly done by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the



Galatians. Speaking of the law, he there says, that "it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." Very few Christians, I apprehend, ever think of Moses as a mediator: he is represented by Luther and many others, not as a mediator, whose office is always regarded as a kind one, but as a cruel oppressor, the imposer of an intolerable yoke. If such is his true character, then it is evident a mediator is not necessarily a reconciler and peace-maker,—much less one who intercedes for the afflicted with their angry master; and if such is not his true character then it follows, that Moses, also, was, subordinately, a reconciler and peace-maker, and that his law was not so intolerably severe in its character as it has become customary to represent it. However, the title of Mediator is as unequivocally given to Moses as to Jesus: he was subordinately, representatively, and on a narrow scale, something like what the Lord Jesus Christ was supremely, absolutely, and universally, a mediator between God and men; not however, immediately, for another order of mediators, it appears, intervened between Moses and Jehovah himself. The Apostle states that the law was ordained (in the sense, not of appointed, but of ordered and established) by angels, in (or by) the hand of a mediator. This we know from other sources, was the general opinion of the Jewish doctors; and the martyr Stephen reproaches the people in his dying speech, that they had "received the law by the disposition of angels, and had not kept it," [Acts vii. 53]. It appears from this, that angels, filled with the presence of God, so as to know no other at the time than that they were Jehovah himself, were the immediate agents in the delivery of the law, and that Moses was the mediator between them and the people. This fact does not appear in the narrative in the Old Testament; but there are many instances which prove, that when Jehovah is said to have appeared or spoken to men, it was not the pure Divinity Himself who so appeared and spoke but an angel filled with his presence, who, therefore, is sometimes mentioned under the title of "the angel of the Lord." Now that Moses did act as a mediator between such an angel or angels and the people, is expressly declared by himself: for he says to the people [Deut. v. 5], "I stood between the Lord

and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord." When Moses says, "I stood between the Lord and you," he declares that he was a Mediator according to what we have before shown to be the strict and literal meaning of the original word,—*one who stands in the middle between two other parties or things*. He was equally a mediator in the more figurative sense of the term, as one who goes between two other parties to bring them to a state of agreement: for he received the law from God, or from his more immediate ministers, the angels of his presence, wrote it in a book, propounded it to the people and obtained from them an engagement to accept and perform it. Now in all this it is very plain that Moses acted as a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, as the Eternal Logos—the Word which was in the beginning with God and was God,—communicated that law of which Moses mediated the acceptance with the people; and who, as the Word made flesh, or as to his Divine Humanity, is the grand Medium, by which the gospel, and all the aids of the Spirit necessary for man's everlasting salvation are dispensed to mankind. Between Moses, then, as a mediator, and the Mediatorship of Jesus Christ, there is a certain parallel and just correspondence, so that the one may be viewed as representing the other: but in the mediatorship of Moses very little can be found that agrees with the ordinary notions of the Mediation of Jesus Christ.

The other two passages in which the title of Mediator is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ are in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and are exactly the same in purport as the one which we have last considered. In ch. ix. 15, the Apostle writes "For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The Mediator of the new testament (where the word for "testament" is the same as is usually, as in the passages quoted before, translated "covenant"), denotes, as before, the dispenser of the new covenant,—the Medium or Instrument by which the new covenant or Christian dispensation, with all the graces and aids of the Spirit therewith imparted is communicated to mankind.

This Medium is the Divine Humanity, which was glorified or rendered Divine "by means of death" which is the reason that that phrase is introduced. The Lord's Humanity was made Divine, and new aids of the Holy Spirit were in consequence imparted, "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament (or covenant),"—for man's redemption or deliverance from the evils that could not be interiorly removed by any divine aids capable of being given under the dispensations which existed before; in consequence of which, "they who are called," so as to become the subjects of this new dispensation, and receivers of the Holy Spirit that proceeds from the Lord's Glorified Humanity, "receive the promise of eternal inheritance." All which is beautifully in accord with the doctrine of the Mediation of Jesus Christ, as we endeavoured to set forth in our last Lecture.

The last passage is very similar. Among the blessings bestowed on sincere Christians, the Apostle says, "Ye are come—to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." "The Mediator of the new covenant" means exactly the same as before. The blood of sprinkling is the Divine Truth, purifying the heart, proceeding from the Lord's Divine Humanity.

I have now gone through all the texts in which the Lord Jesus Christ is denominated a Mediator, and in which his work of Mediation is spoken of in connexion with the use of that word. The whole, we see, perfectly accord with the doctrine of the Mediation of Jesus Christ, which we regard as that of the True Christian Religion; while it is very difficult indeed to derive from them any countenance for the notions which are usually offered as composing that doctrine. Nothing is found in them representing the Son as pleading with the Father on behalf of man; nothing of his urging his sufferings and the merit of them as inducements with the Father to comply with his intreaty; nothing, indeed, of any appeal of the Son to the Father at all: but all relates to his desires and exertions to communicate the effectual means of grace and salvation to mankind; which was accomplished, by his descending, as the Word which in the beginning was with God, and was God, to assume

Humanity, and imparting from that Humanity when rendered Divine, as the only possible Medium for the purpose, those aids of the Spirit which place man in a state capable of salvation, and convey salvation to him, in proportion to his acceptance and obedience.

II. The doctrine of the Mediation of Jesus Christ, and that of his Intercession, amount, in effect, to the very same thing. The same thing is presented in Scripture, sometimes under the name of Mediation, or rather of Jesus as a Mediator, and sometimes under that of Intercession. The passages which expressly speak of the Lord Jesus as a Mediator, are, we have found, but very few; those which mention his Intercession, under that title, are even less numerous. To the consideration of these we are now to direct our attention; and if the view just given of the true purport of the texts which speak of the Lord as a Mediator, together with the nature of his Mediation as explained in the preceding Lecture, and further elucidated in the preceding part of this, be borne in mind, we shall not find much difficulty in apprehending how the passages which mention his Intercession are to be understood, in harmony with all the other doctrines of the Word of God, especially with those of the Absolute Unity, and purely Benevolent Nature, of our Creator and Redeemer.

The most striking and explicit declaration respecting the Lord's Intercession, is that which I read in the text of the present Lecture, from Heb. vii. 25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." A similar statement occurs in the Epistle to the Romans, ch. viii. ver. 34; where, in answer to the question, "Who is he that condemneth?"—the Apostle replies, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us." And these are the only two passages in the New Testament in which the Intercession of Jesus Christ is expressly named.

But if no mention occurs in the New Testament of the Intercession of Jesus Christ except in these two texts, there is another passage in the same chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which Intercession is twice mentioned in relation

to the Holy Spirit. Intercession is there ascribed to the Holy Spirit, no less explicitly than, in the two other texts, to the Lord Jesus Christ. I have before quoted the passage, and slightly explained it. It occurs in vers. 26, 27; where the Apostle writes, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Now if, according to the generally received doctrine, the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person distinct from Jesus Christ, then there are two Divine Intercessors; and if, as is undeniable, intercession is a work of mediation, it is no less certain that there are two Divine Mediators; but how is this reconcilable with the decided statement of the Apostle already considered, that there is but "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus?" If the Apostle Paul, when affirming that both the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ make intercession for man, meant that they do so as distinct Divine Persons, what becomes of his express and solemn declaration, that there is "one Mediator," and no more? That there is an error here, one way or other, is beyond all question.

The orthodox commentators (so accounted), could not but see this dilemma: and how do they endeavour to escape from it? By no less bold a course than that of affirming, that the intercession of the Holy Ghost is no proper intercession at all. What, then; has the Apostle Paul made a mistake, or used improper language, in saying so? The phrase "to make intercession," is used by our translators for the single word that occurs in the original with strict uniformity: the word employed by the Apostle in the original of his Epistles, twice in application to the Lord Jesus Christ and twice in relation to the Holy Spirit, is always the same, except that, in one instance, it is combined with a preposition which does not alter the sense: must not, then, its meaning be the same, when spoken of the Holy Ghost, as when applied to the Lord Jesus Christ? Influenced by the necessity, which they feel as so pressing, of

upholding the doctrine of Mediation and Intercession as generally received, and at the same time the doctrine of a separation as to person of the three Subsistences of the Trinity,—in answer to this question, the leading expositors say, “No.” The most laborious modern commentator on the Epistles in the English Language (Dr. Macknight), instead of saying, in the just rendering of our translators, “the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us,” gives the passage, “the Spirit himself *strongly complaineth* for us.” And after the statement in the next verse, that “he who searcheth the hearts knoweth what the mind of the Spirit is,” instead of, “because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God,” he completes the sentence with, “that to God he *complaineth* for the saints. And he adds in a note, “No where in the Scripture is the Spirit said to *intercede* for men, in the proper sense of *intercession*,\* which is, the merit of the intercessor pleaded in behalf of another. In this proper sense, there is but one intercessor with God, the man Christ Jesus.” Upon what authority does the expositor here say, that “no where in Scripture is the Spirit said to intercede for man in the proper sense of intercession?” Twice, we find, is the Spirit said by the Apostle to intercede for men, and twice, and no more, is the Lord Jesus Christ said, by the same Apostle, to intercede for men: and in every instance he uses the same word, with one little variation not affecting the sense. Thus the Intercession of Jesus Christ, as far as the Apostle’s testimony goes, stands upon exactly the same ground as the Intercession of the Spirit: where then is the authority on which it is pretended, that in one case the proper sense of Intercession is intended,—in the other not? On what foundation, also, does the learned—perhaps the imaginative—commentator build, when he affirms, that “the proper sense of intercession is, the merit of the intercessor pleaded in behalf of another?” Does any lexicographer whatever explain the word in this manner? Does the explanation hold good in any ordinary instance? When a bishop, with others, lately petitioned for the commutation of the punishment of a great criminal, did he dream of using the plea, “I am a holy man: for my merit, then, spare the life of this murderer?” Is

it not evident, that this highly esteemed commentator, first mistranslated the text, and then gave a false definition of the proper sense of intercession, to screen a view of the doctrine, which cannot be maintained, if the meaning be fairly confessed, and the true sense of the term left unperverted? It is plain, also, that when this interpreter defines the proper sense of intercession to be, "the merit of the intercessor pleaded in behalf of another," he had in his mind, and wished to uphold, the idea of the Intercession of Jesus Christ commonly entertained, which is, that He is continually interceding in heaven for mankind with the Father, by pleading the merits of his own sufferings and death—of his whole active and passive righteousness, as it is called,—as a reason why his Father should comply with his requests; whereas it is a fact, that no assertion of such a pleading is to be found in Scripture, either in the writings of this Apostle, or any where else. And yet this celebrated translator and annotator, who here gives such an instance, in his own person, of theological prejudice, and its injurious operation on the interpretation of Scripture, was so well aware of its tendency, and of the necessity of guarding against it, that he could candidly say of the famous Reformer Beza, Calvin's disciple and successor (whose Latin-version of the New Testament has greatly influenced all subsequent Protestant translations, including the English one),—"He hath mistranslated a number of texts for the purpose, as it would seem, of establishing his peculiar doctrines, and of confuting his opponents;" and "by strained criticisms, he hath made texts express doctrines, which, though they may be true, were not intended by the inspired writers to be set forth in them:"—a censure which, in the instance before us and in many more, most certainly applies to the writer of it, and to most other translators and commentators of Scripture.

I have adverted to this translation and annotation of Dr. Macknight, to show that the advocates of the theology of the day are themselves aware of the danger which threatens their system, if the Holy Spirit be allowed to intercede with God for man, either in the customary sense of that word, or in the strained sense which Dr. Macknight assigns to it. If, as already

remarked, the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ are two Divine Persons, then, most certainly, it is not true that the latter is the "one Mediator." If He truly is the "one Mediator," and yet the Holy Spirit, as well as He, "makes intercession," it follows undeniably, that they cannot be two Persons: but if as has fully been shown, "the Man Christ Jesus" is the Lord as to his Divine Humanity, and the Holy Spirit is the Divine Influence and operative Energy proceeding from the Divine Humanity, and thus is the Lord Himself as dwelling and energizing in man, then all contradiction disappears, and the "one Mediator" is also the sole Intercessor, considered either as to his Divine Humanity or as to the Divine Proceeding thence,—considered either as the Lord in his proper Person, or as abiding in man by his Emanating Life.

But though, in giving such a rendering and interpretation of the passage now before us, Dr. Macknight has, for the sake of preserving the common notions of the Lord's intercession and of the distinction of Person between Him and the Holy Ghost, more openly displayed the theological partizan than some others, yet most of the expositors have been equally anxious, if not to drop the word "intercession" out of this text, because applied to the Holy Spirit, at any rate to get rid of the idea, that, when so applied, it bears the same sense as when spoken of Jesus Christ. Even the moderate Doddridge, in his Paraphrase, drops the word, in the passage before us, though he exchanges it for a phrase which well expresses the strict meaning of the original term: but he objects to use the word "intercession," in reference to the Holy Spirit, because, as he says, "the office of an Intercessor with God is so peculiarly that of Christ, *our advocate with the Father.*" Thus, though Paul uses the same word of both, his professed interpreters feel repugnance to do so, out of tenderness to a system of theology to which Paul was a stranger. The most learned, critical, and copious, of the recent English annotators on the New Testament, Dr. Bloomfield, also intimates disapproval of the word, and takes care to show, that all the principal interpreters affirm, that, as applied to the Holy Ghost, it does not mean the same thing as when applied to Jesus Christ. "The *intercession*, if so it may be called [he says], of



the *Holy Ghost*, is quite of another kind to that ascribed to the *Son*. The true nature of it (he adds), has been well illustrated by Erasmus, Beza, Estius, Paræus, Grotius, Wolf, and others, as follows ; "The Holy Spirit intercedes, not as a mediator, by virtue of his own merit, which is Christ's only, but as advocate, who excites the faithful, as it were his *clients*, to prayer, shows them what they are to pray for, and cherishes their hope of obtaining their petitions." Yet Doddridge, we have seen, will not allow the Holy Ghost's title to be called our *advocate*; and Dr. Bloomfield agrees with him; for he adds, "To the above particulars, however, I must take exception in one point; namely, as respects the term *advocate*, which, in fact, comes to the same thing as *intercessor*." Thus, though the Apostle affirms that the Holy Spirit "makes intercession for us," and expresses it by the same word as he applies to the Intercession of Jesus Christ, the prevailing system of theology will not allow its maintainers to admit, that the Holy Spirit is an Intercessor, nevertheless. And yet, if the notion of the separate Personality of the Holy Ghost and of the Lord Jesus Christ be laid aside, and the Holy Ghost be viewed as the Divine Life, Power, and Operative Energy, proceeding from the Lord's Divine Humanity, designated as "the Man Christ Jesus;" while this again is the Manifested Form or Person of the Essential Divinity, or the Father, brought into the natural degree of life to accommodate the divine influences to apprehension and reception by man in a fallen natural state; all obscurity will disappear. The Intercession of the Holy Ghost is the Intercession of Him from whom the Holy Ghost proceeds; as much as the effect produced by a mandate which a king issues to his officer, or by a letter which a man writes to his friend or to his servant, is an effect produced by the king or the man. The Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the Medium by which all the divine works for the salvation of man are produced; and the Holy Spirit is the Divine Operation modified by the Divine Humanity so as to accomplish the purposes in view; and the operations of which, therefore, whether called intercession or anything else, are no less the operations and intercession of the Lord's Divine Humanity, the Man Christ Jesus.

But it is necessary to consider what the idea intended to be conveyed by the Greek word used by the Apostle, and which is rendered in the English Bible by "to make intercession," properly is. Is it making intercession by supplication, intreaty, or prayer? Or are other modes of intercession denoted, either including supplication or otherwise?

It is proper first to observe, that the term used by the Apostle is not a noun but a verb. It is rendered rather more emphatic than it is in the original, when it is translated in our Bible, "to make intercession." Literally, it is, *to intercede*. Literally, the passage about the Holy Spirit would say, that the Spirit "intercedes for us, or "for the saints:" that of our text about the Lord Jesus Christ would be, "He ever liveth to intercede for us:" and that in Rom. viii. 34, "Who also intercedes for us." It appears to have been merely for the sake of euphony, that our translators adopted the more emphatic form, "maketh intercession," or "to make intercession."

Now, though all the expositors seem to suppose, that intercession, when spoken of the Lord, means supplication and prayer for us offered by Him to the Father, yet, in agreement with the undeniable force of the original word as shown by all the lexicographers, from its use by the ancient writers, all the more candid and learned of the commentators admit that it strictly imports much more than supplication, and does not always, and necessarily, include this. Thus, speaking of the intercession of the Holy Ghost, Dr. Bloomfield most justly observes, "In order more clearly to comprehend this little understood point of Christian theology, especial attention must be paid to the primitive sense of [the Apostle's original word] *ἐντυγχάνειν* and [the Latin word from which we derive our word *intercede*] *intercedere*; which is, 'to go between any two persons—to manage any one's business with another.' Now this [our author adds] may be done in various ways; either by acting as *Speaker*, *Advocate*, or as *Pleader*, (which last office [he affirms] belongs to our Saviour); or (as is that of the Holy Spirit), suggesting the best means of accomplishing any business; and therefore aiding and acting *ὡς ἐκ ἡμῶν*, *on our behalf*; or (to use an illustration drawn from human affairs) as a solicitor or attorney acts on behalf of another, by suggesting to him what

is proper for him to say, and putting him in the right way to proceed in any business. And it is truly observed [this learned writer proceeds to say] by Taylor, that ‘the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, not by making supplication to God in their behalf, but by directing and qualifying their supplications in a proper manner, by his agency and influence upon their hearts.’” What is here stated on the primitive sense of the original word, and of the corresponding Latin (and thence English word), is most true, and most important; and (except as to assigning to the Saviour the office, literally, of a Pleader) there is much genuine truth in the whole passage. The primitive sense of the Apostle’s original word, is, all scholars acknowledge, “to go between any two persons—to manage any one’s business with another.” Therefore Doddridge, who wrote long before, while demurring to the use of the word *intercession* in regard to the agency of the Holy Ghost, renders the two passages in which, in reference to the Spirit, the original word occurs, “The Spirit itself manages these affairs for us;” and, “He manages affairs for the saints according to the gracious will of God.” And our standard lexicographer, Johnson, like a man of sound learning as he was, defines the English word agreeably to the sense of its original. “To intercede,” he says, is “to pass between two parties; to mediate; to act between two parties.” “Intercession” is “mediation; interposition; agency between two parties: agency in the cause of another.” He does not mention supplication as any part of the “proper sense” of intercession; much less “the merit of the intercessor pleaded in behalf of another.”

Now when the commentators are so willing to allow—generally, so eager to affirm,—that it is in the *primitive* sense of the original Greek word, and of the corresponding Latin word, which we render *to intercede*, that the term is to be understood when spoken of the Holy Ghost, and not in that of interceding by prayer and supplication, though it is said to intercede “with groanings which cannot be uttered;”—when, in relation to the Holy Ghost, the word is allowed to bear its strict and proper meaning of “going between any two parties,” and of “managing any one’s business with another;” why cannot this meaning be

admitted when the word is applied to Jesus Christ, or to the Lord as to his Divine Humanity, which is never, as now existing glorified in heaven, said to pray or supplicate for man, or to address the Father in any way whatever, because He is now one God, and one Person, with the Essential Divine Principle so denominated? When it is said that Jesus "is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," why cannot it be acknowledged, that the meaning is, that the Lord as to his Humanity acts as a Medium between the inconceivable, incomprehensible Divinity and man in his frailty,—comes between these two otherwise mutually unapproachable parties,—manages, so to speak, the business of each with the other,—opens a communication between fallen, sinful man and the infinitely pure and holy God, even as to his Essential Divinity,—dispenses, from his Divine Humanity, by his proceeding Spirit, the communications of the Divine Love and Wisdom, in the forms of saving grace, so modified as to be suited to man's capacities of reception—hears, and gives acceptance to, all the upward aspirations, prayers, and desires of man, and brings him to the knowledge of, and to conjunction with, the Infinite God in his divinely Human Person, thus such as man can conceive of, can spiritually and intellectually see, can truly embrace with love, and be intimately united to for ever? This is what the Eternal Jehovah, whose very essence is Infinite Love, clothed himself with Humanity to accomplish; and is not this acting as an Intercessor in the primitive and most proper sense of the term,—that of coming between two parties, managing the business of each with the other, and abolishing the separation which existed between them? And is not this "saving to the uttermost them that come to God by him,"—by the Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ as a Medium of access? What else can properly be meant by coming to God by Him, but approaching the Essential Divinity as residing in, and thus as accessible by or through, the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ? How otherwise can He, seeing He ever liveth to do so, "make intercession" for us, so as that we shall "come to God by Him?" It is not by only taking his name on our lips, and then attempting to climb up above Him

to God the Father ; nor yet by his making intercession in the way of intreating the Father to pardon and receive us, that we can possibly "come unto God by him : " it must be by coming to God in, and thus by, the Lord's Humanity, and by his making intercession in the way of coming between us and the otherwise unapproachable Divine Essence, and admitting us to communication and conjunction therewith in Himself. Thus hath He opened to us "a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh ; " that is, by his Humanity, consecrated or glorified [Heb. x. 20].

Now if it is by his Divine Humanity in which is the Essential Divinity that we have these blessed privileges, it is evident, that the intercession is not in any way of supplication. The Humanity, when glorified or made Divine, and the Essential Divinity, being perfectly united, and forming one Person, as man's body forms one person with his soul, there could be no prayer or supplication of one to the other after the union was completely effected. And, as we have observed, no intimation of such a thing is ever to be found in Scripture. While the Humanity was yet unglorified, and the Lord, in a body of material flesh and blood, was still in the world, and had perceptions therein similar to the perceptions of men in the world ; while, moreover, he was engaged in his works of redemption, combating with the infernal powers, and suffering from them most direful temptations even to despair ; he did indeed pray to the Father as to a distinct Divinity, as we have seen in our Lecture on the Lord's Resurrection : but when He was glorified so as to be One with him, and to enjoy the full perception of such Oneness, He did so no more ; and no trace of any thing of the kind, after his resurrection, is to be found in the Gospels, in the Acts, in anything said of Him in the Epistles, or in the Revelation. Yet strange to say, though all learned commentators confess that intercession does not necessarily, in its proper sense, include supplication, they seem almost to regard this as its most important meaning when spoken of Jesus Christ. Not only, however, have we the negative evidence, that there is no mention of any address of Jesus Christ to the Father after his resurrection, but we find an express statement by Him, in his

last discourse with his disciples, that such would be the fact. After having spoken of his leaving them to go to the Father, and of his coming to them again as the Comforter or Spirit of truth, He says [John xvi. 26, 27], "At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." Plain readers will understand this literally to mean, that when Jesus should have gone to the Father, and the disciples began to pray in his name, He himself would not solicit the Father for them any more, as this could not be necessary, when the Father himself equally loved them on account of their love to, and faith in, Him. How do those whose doctrine cannot subsist without the notion of the Lord's praying to the Father, and pleading his merits, for his people, receive this saying of the Lord Jesus Christ? They receive it, by refusing to believe it. Jesus seems very plainly to say, that when He should have gone to the Father, He would no longer pray to him, as this would then be unnecessary and useless. No, says Bishop Pearce in his Commentary, this text "means not that he would not pray for his apostles; for he did pray for them in ch. xvii. 9, &c: but only that he had no need to pray for them, they being *loved of God*, and therefore sure to be heard by him." But what force is there in this answer? Jesus says that he should not pray for the disciples *after he should have gone to the Father*: the commentator replies, that he did pray for them *before* He went to the Father, in the prayer with which he concluded this very discourse! And how is this mended by the Bishop's saying, that he only meant that he had no need to pray for them, they being loved of God, and therefore sure to be heard by him? All the commentators as well as Dr. Pearce (whom I only here quote, in preference, for his pithy brevity), admit Jesus to say, and to mean, that his praying for his people would be useless, as it would only be urging the Father to do what he was equally disposed to do without such solicitation: and yet they all represent such prayer of Jesus to the Father, pleading in it his sufferings and merit, to be, at least, a part of the intercession which He is now making in heaven, and will make unceasingly till the end

of all things. All represent the Saviour as perpetually engaged in an act, which, according to his own declaration, and their admission, is utterly unnecessary, of no possible use, a complete work of supererogation. Is such a representation worthy of a Being of Infinite Wisdom? Occupation in trifles—still more in mere futilities, is universally regarded as a mark, in man, of imbecility of mind : who can reasonably believe anything so futile as needless intreaty to be the unremitting occupation of the Eternal Logos, the Divine Wisdom, the Word made flesh? Certainly, then, the obvious sense of his previous statement is the true one,—that He should not, when in glory, be engaged in praying for his disciples. Consequently, his Intercession in no degree consists in such prayer. It must then consist, as already explained, in his Divine Humanity, as a uniting Medium, coming between degenerate man and the otherwise inaccessible Divine Essence, and, in familiar language, managing the business of each party with the other. The business of God with man is, the accomplishment of the purposes of his Divine Love and Wisdom in man's salvation ; and the business of man with God is, to supplicate and adore his mercy, receive his grace, and to obtain with Him conjunction of life, and a blessed immortality : and the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the Medium, by the intervention of which the purposes of Love and Wisdom for man's salvation are made effectual, by being accommodated to his state of apprehension and reception ; and man's reciprocal devotion and gratitude can ascend to God, and be made perceptible before his throne.

I have now, I hope, sufficiently considered all the passages of the New Testament which expressly mention the Lord's Intercession. There is also one in the Old Testament, in Isaiah liii. 12, which says that "he made intercession for the transgressors : " but to this may equally be applied what has been said of the others. I trust it cannot fail to be seen, that the ideas of the Intercession of Jesus Christ commonly entertained cannot possibly be true,—that no supplication of one Divine Person to another, with pleading of merits, and, as some delight to represent it, displaying of wounds, can possibly be included in the true Scripture doctrine on the subject. I trust that the view we

have offered as the real truth,—that the Lord's Intercession is the coming in, or intervention, of his Divine Humanity, as a reconciling and conjoining Medium, between the otherwise unapproachable Divine Essence and man in his present, by birth, fallen and merely natural state,—will also be seen to be the only one that meets all the conditions of the case. Many more illustrative texts might be examined, and corroborative considerations suggested, would time permit: but this, I apprehend, will not be deemed necessary, after the attention which has been given to those which mention the Lord's Mediation and Intercession, As we have before seen, in "the Man Christ Jesus"—the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ,—we have a Mediator who is ever standing ready to communicate to us all the blessings of salvation and eternal life; in whom we have a way of access opened to the inmost Divinity, and by conjunction of life with whom, we have also conjunction with the Infinite and the Eternal,—with Him who is Infinite and Eternal in the very ground of his being. He is the Door—the Medium of access,—by which if any man enter in, he shall go in and out and find pasture. All the graces and blessings of the church, both internal and external, shall be enjoyed by him, who truly approaches the Lord Jesus Christ, as his God and Saviour, and, as to his Divine Humanity, the Mediator or Medium of communication between the Infinite and Incomprehensible Godhead and frail and finite man; and the way to approach Him truly is, by living faith, and sincere obedience. Or, what amounts to the same thing, as we have now seen, let us make it our great business to avail ourselves of the benefits procured or brought near to us by the Intercession of Jesus Christ. Thereby, the Lord accommodates the influences of his Spirit, and communicates his grace, so as to make us inexcusable if we refuse to accept them: let us do so with gratitude, re-act to them in repentance, faith, obedience, and love; approach our God, thus accessible in his Humanity, in heartfelt prayer; return his mercies in devout acknowledgment; and enter into conjunction with Him, thus inviting it and making it practicable, to his glory and our benefit, for evermore.



## LECTURE XIX.

THE ADVOCATESHIP OF JESUS CHRIST, AND OF THE HOLY  
SPIRIT.

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1 JOHN ii. 1, 2, and JOHN xiv. 16.

*"My little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."*

*"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."*

IN our last two Lectures we have considered the doctrine of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ, have endeavoured to place that doctrine in its true light, and have examined all the texts of Scripture in which either Mediation or Intercession is mentioned under those names. We have seen that it is as to his Divine Humanity, called by the Apostle, "the Man Christ Jesus," that the Lord is our Mediator and Intercessor ; because, according to the primitive meaning of the original words, a Mediator is *one who stands between*, and an Intercessor is *one who comes between*, any two parties, who transacts the business of one with the other, mutually communicates their wishes and requirements, and, where they are at variance, brings them into a state of agreement ; and the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ acts as a Medium, by which, on the one hand, the divine operations for man's salvation are modified and dispensed, in a manner suited to his capacity of reception, so as to operate upon him with adequate effect, and, on the other hand, the wants, desires, and aspirations of man are brought before the throne of God, so as to obtain hearing, relief, and acceptance. Thus the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ are not the agency

of a separate person, either pleading or otherwise communicating with God, for man, or with man for God, as a human mediator or intercessor would plead or negotiate between two other men; but the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ exactly answer to the operations of the body of man, with its senses and members, as mediating between his spirit or mind and other persons and things in the world, effecting a communication between them which could no otherwise exist, making that existence and presence reciprocally perceived or experienced, conveying the purposes and decisions of the mind of one man to another, and those of that other to the former, and enabling the mind also to accomplish what it may desire, so far as practicable, in regard to animals and inanimate objects. The Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ mediates between the Divine Essence and men on earth, in a manner exactly analogous to that in which the body of man mediates between his mind and spirit within him and the world around him; and because the Divine Logos or Word, as this existed before the incarnation, was no longer adequate to operate savingly upon man, when man had so far withdrawn himself,—when he had so buried his mind in his body, and immersed himself so entirely in the sphere of mere nature, as was then and now the case,—therefore the Word, the Eternal Logos—was made flesh,—assumed Humanity when human nature had sunk into the lowest state in which it possibly could sink without ceasing to be human at all, purified the assumed Humanity from all defilement, and at length glorified it or made it Divine; thence to re-open the communication between fallen man and the pure Divine Essence, of which the glorified Humanity had become the Manifested Form, and which resided therein, and thence communicated the aids of the Spirit or the divine influences, by which man is regenerated and saved. And, as we have repeatedly stated, it is this which is called the Mediator, and which is said to make Intercession for us, because it is the Medium which comes as it were between the naked Divinity and the human race, and restores the broken connexion between them,

As I began with observing, I fully explained this in our last two Lectures, in the latter of which I examined all the texts

in which either the Mediatorship or the Intercession of Jesus Christ is named. That examination, I apprehend, was of itself sufficient to establish all that was advanced. I observed, however, that many more illustrative texts might be referred to, and corroborative considerations suggested; and though I then did not propose to do so, as not in itself necessary, yet I have since thought it might be useful to advert to one or two more, which are commonly regarded as supporting the popular erroneous notions of the Lord's intercession, together with another or two which luminously substantiate the doctrine which, we have endeavoured to show, expresses the genuine truth upon the subject.

The popular notions of the Lord's Intercession are, as I stated in our last Lecture, and as is generally known, that it consists in the Son's intreating the Father in behalf of mankind, pleading the merits of his sufferings and death, and, as is often eloquently averred and dwelt upon, displaying his wounds, to induce the Father to have mercy upon those, for whom all this was undergone by his Son. But I quoted the statements of the principal orthodox commentators on the meaning of the original word translated in our Bible "to make intercession," and showed that all the most learned of them admit, that the sense of intreating or supplicating is not necessarily included in it, but that its primitive meaning is, "to go between any two parties, to transact any one's business with another." This, we have seen, perfectly agrees with the true doctrine of the Lord's Intercession, as I have now, again, briefly explained it. We have also shown, that the same original word is applied, in each case *twice*, both to Jesus Christ and to the Holy Ghost, and is, in all cases alike, translated in the English Bible by *making intercession*. The orthodox commentators, however, we have seen, will not allow that, applied to the Holy Ghost, this is its proper meaning. In this application, Doddridge, we have noticed, translates it by *manages our affairs*; being a familiar form of what Bloomfield and all learned men admit to, be the primitive meaning of both the original Greek word, and of the Latin word from which we take our *intercede*; and which meaning Johnson assigns as the proper signification of the English

*intercede* itself. Yet, when applied to Jesus Christ, all the commentators retain the rendering of *making intercession*, and though some of them state justly the *primitive* meaning of the original word, they all here write as if its *principal* meaning was that of *making supplication*. But, as we have shown, there is no need for this refining and distinguishing; for, in its primitive meaning, the word is equally applicable to the Intercession of the Holy Spirit and to that of Jesus Christ. The Apostle made no mistake in using the same term to describe the divine operations of both, because they are not the operations of two divine persons, but of one only.

But there is a passage which, although the word "intercession" does not occur in it, manifestly means the same thing, and which is much dwelt upon by writers on the subject; and to which, therefore, we will now direct some attention. It is that which I have read in the text: in which the beloved disciple says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Of course, the Apostle does not write this to encourage any one to sin. As he previously says, "Little children, these things I write unto you that ye *sin not*." But lest any should thence conclude, that if, though endeavouring habitually to guard against sin, they should at any time be overtaken by an unintentional fault, they are excluded from their hopes of salvation, he reminds them (if their sin has not been wilful, if they repent of it, and purpose to guard against the like in future), that they have, in and from Jesus Christ,—the essential Righteous One, and the Author of righteousness to all who look to Him,—all that is necessary for their recovery from their fall, and the means of returning into communion with the Essential Godhead in Him.

But it is not my intention, at present, to dwell upon the practical lesson thus taught, further than is necessary to guard it against being misunderstood or perverted: I wish, chiefly, to consider the title here given to Jesus Christ, of "our Advocate with the Father."

I. I have adverted to the objection made by Doddridge and Bloomfield to the idea of an *Intercessor* in relation to the Holy Ghost; and I stated in the former Lecture, that Doddridge

makes this objection, because, as he says, "the office of an Intercessor with God is so peculiarly that of Christ, *our advocate with the Father*." So Bloomfield, we found, objects to the term *advocate*, applied to the Holy Spirit by the authors he quotes, because it, "in fact, comes to the same thing as *intercessor*." This term "advocate," applied to Jesus Christ, occurs in the English Bible only *once*, and that is in the verse of John's first Epistle which I have now taken as a text. But, strange to say, though some of the commentators are so anxious to claim this epithet as exclusively a title of the Saviour, the original word here so rendered, is, precisely as is the case with the word for *intercede*, equally applied to the Holy Ghost: and that, much more frequently. It is no other than the word *Paracletos*, which has been anglicized into *Paraclete*; and which, in the gospel, our translators constantly render *the Comforter*. Whatever may be its proper meaning, the Gospel of John applies it four times to the Holy Ghost; and this first Epistle of John applies it once to Jesus Christ." And it occurs no where else in the whole Bible. Certain then it is, that both the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ are equally the, or a, *Paraclete*. What does a *Paraclete* mean?

That the original word sometimes occurs in ancient Greek writers in the sense of a *Comforter*, is undisputed; and that it is in imparting comfort or consolation that the influences of the Holy Spirit are greatly exercised, is equally acknowledged; on which account it is, that our translators have designated the Holy Spirit *the Comforter*, this being one of the meanings of the word, which I shall repeat in its English form, *Paraclete*. But the original word signified, more generally, a *Teacher*, and an *Interpreter of another person's discourse or meaning*; and in this sense, philologers affirm it to be established beyond doubt, that this identical Greek word, in a Hebrew form, had been introduced into the Syriac dialect spoken by the Lord and his apostles, and was the very term made use of by Him in his long discourse, related in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John, in which it is four times given to the Holy Spirit. And the celebrated lexicographer, Schleusner, from whom I take this statement, adds, "Hence (as was correctly seen by

the ancient father, Tertullian,)), the Holy Spirit, or that divine power which assisted the apostles to discharge their office, is called *the Paraclete*, as being *the interpreter to the Apostles of the divine will, their teacher, and counsellor.*" The Greek word also has a third meaning, in which it signifies "*a patron, an advocate, or a person called and requested to befriend and assist any one before a judge; and more generally, without reference to any matter of law, any one who manages another's business protects him in circumstances of danger or difficulty, and affords him counsel and aid.*" And according to this very learned interpreter, the latter is the sense of the word when Jesus Christ is called "*our Paraclete with the Father,*" in the passage now under consideration. He is so called, *because he manages the penitent sinner's business, protects him in circumstances of danger or difficulty, and affords him counsel and aid.*" And this, as we have seen, is exactly the office of the Lord's Divine Humanity, which is the Medium of communication between man and the Essential Divinity, and by the operation of which alone it is, that we are enabled to rise from our lapses, and to be re-instated in our privileges as children of God.

Even Doddridge corroborates all that has now been advanced as to the proper meaning of the original word, though much more has since been brought forward to illustrate it than was easily accessible in his time. Anxious as, we have seen, he was, when commenting on the eighth chapter of Romans, to claim the title of Advocate as exclusively belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ; when he comes, after writing two more volumes of his work, to the text in which alone, in the English Bible, that word is introduced, he acknowledges that it is only the English sense of the word *Advocate* that suits the common view, and that the original word has a more general sense, which is more truly that of the text in question. He says, "*The word Advocate, in our language, commonly signifies one who is to plead for a person in a court of judicature; but Dr. S. Harris has taken great pains to show, that it properly signifies the same with patron among the Romans,—a great person who used to patronize the cause of some of inferior rank, and was also a sponsor for their good behaviour.—Perhaps [adds Dr. D.] there is nothing*

that illustrates the matter more, than the residence of some eminent persons from distant provinces in the courts of great princes or states, whose business it was constantly to negotiate with them the affairs of those whom they represented, to vindicate them from any unjust aspersions, and to advance their interests to the utmost of their power." Thus Dr. Doddridge, though protesting against it before, when commenting on Rom. viii., now, when annotating on the first Epistle of John, gives a similar account of the *advocacy of Jesus Christ*, as he had then given of the *intercession of the Holy Ghost*. He then said, instead of speaking of the spirit as *making intercession*, that "He *manages affairs* for the saints:" he now says, that Jesus Christ, as our Advocate, is like those residents at courts, "whose business it was to *negotiate the affairs* of those whom they represented." Thus he at last admits, that the intercession of Jesus Christ is substantially the same as the intercession of the Holy Ghost. And Dr. Bloomfield, in his annotations on the same text, quotes this passage with approbation; and so, does even Dr. Macknight. So also, before Dr. Doddridge had discovered the necessity, to support the common doctrine, of distinguishing so widely as he did, when paraphrasing and annotating on Rom. viii. 26, 27, between the intercession of the Holy Ghost and that of Jesus Christ, and of confining the office of our Advocate to Jesus Christ alone, he said, in his note on John xiv. 16, where "the Comforter" is first mentioned, "It is well known that the word *Paraclete* may signify a *comforter*, an *advocate*, or a *monitor*; and it is evident the blessed Spirit *sustained each of these characters*:" This is very true; but how does it agree with his subsequent assertion, that "the office of an Intercessor with God is so peculiarly that of Christ, *our advocate with the Father*?" So difficult it is for error to be consistent. However, at one time or other he admits, that the Holy Ghost is *our Advocate* in the same sense as Jesus Christ is *our Advocate*, which cannot be by their both making supplication for us as separate Persons from the Father; and that the proper sense of the word *advocate* when applied to both is, *one whose business it is to negotiate the affairs of those for whom he is concerned*. Thus it is confessed, that the *Advocacy* ascribed

both to Jesus Christ and to the Holy Spirit is exactly the same thing as the *Intercession* equally ascribed to both, and which Doddridge had defined to be the *managing of the affairs* of man with God and of God with man ; and this, we have fully seen, is the operation of the Lord's Divine Humanity, aiding man by the Spirit thence proceeding, on the one hand, and opening to man, on the other, by approaching the Lord in his Divine Humanity, a way of access to the Inmost of Deity, denominated the Father. And this is not effected by any supplication addressed by the Son to the Father, any more than a request made by one man to another through the medium of his body, when conveyed by the body to the mind within it, is granted in consequence of any supplication made by the body to the mind. The notion of supplication is as preposterous in the one case as in the other : for though the body and the soul, to which the mind belongs, are not the same thing, yet, together, they form a one : the soul imparts its life to the body, and the body, by its senses, transmits its perceptions to the mind and soul. Thus the mind knows all that occurs within the sphere of the senses of the body, and the body speaks and acts, from the determinations of the mind, to persons and on things around it. And this is a just image of the *Advocacy*, which is, in fact, the same thing as the *Intercession*, which again is the same thing as the *Mediation*, of Jesus Christ.

The statement then of the Apostle John, that in Jesus Christ "we have an advocate with the Father," does not at all, we see, sanction the notion, that his *Intercession* consists in intreating the Father, as another Divine Person, on behalf of men, pleading for them the merits of his sufferings and death. And yet, although, when they who regard this as the true doctrine on the subject, candidly examine, by the light of sound learning, the Scripture words and phrases commonly understood as teaching it, they are obliged to acknowledge that the most important of those words do not, in their primitive and proper sense, mean any such thing,—they still cleave to the notion, that the *Intercession* of Jesus Christ is, nevertheless, such a pleading with the Father. This has led me to examine on what other passage or passages they think themselves entitled to affirm such pleading,



I have only been able to find one, generally referred to. Some of the less scrupulous partizans of the notion may allege others ; but, as far as I can discover, the respectable and learned expositors whom I have consulted only, with the exception of Dr. Macknight, adduce one ; and many of them do not even do this. All, however, without looking for proof, or while in effect admitting that all proof fails them, seem to take the doctrine for granted, on the bare authority of those who have affirmed it before them, and who framed the creeds of their respective churches.

Dr. Macknight seems to be the person, among respectable commentators, who goes farthest in this way. He finds the doctrine he wishes to support in texts which have nothing of the kind, far more frequently than Beza himself, whom he justly censures for doing so ; and he strains passages out of their proper meaning still more violently than that unscrupulous partizan of Calvinism. As then, right or wrong, he says more than most others for the popular doctrine, which they all wish to maintain, it is from him that I will take some quotations on the subject.

In a note on Heb. vii. 25, about the Saviour's "always living to make intercession for them," which we made the text of our last Lecture, Dr. Macknight thus states his views of the nature of that intercession. "The nature of the Apostle's argument requires, that by Christ's *always living*, we understand his always living *in the body*. For it is thus that he is an affectionate and sympathizing High Priest, who in his intercession pleads the merit of his death, to procure the salvation of all who come to God through him.—The apostle mentions (ver. 27) the sacrifice of himself, which Christ offered for the sins of the people, as the foundation of his intercession. Now, as he offered that sacrifice in heaven (ch. viii. 2, 3), by presenting his crucified body there (see ch. viii. 5, note), and as he continually resides there in the body, some of the ancients were of opinion, that his continual intercession consists in the continual presentation of his humanity before the Father ; because it is a continual declaration of his earnest desire of the salvation of men, and of his having, in obedience to his Father's will, made himself flesh and

suffered death to accomplish it." Here our expositor affirms, not only that the Saviour pleads the merit of his death, but also that he offered that sacrifice *in heaven*, by presenting his crucified body there, as his continual intercession, before the Father: and we are referred for satisfaction as to all this (of which nothing is said in the passage to which this note is appended), to ch. viii. 2, 3, and the note on ch. viii. 5. In the original, and in the common translation, nothing of the sort is said in ch. viii. 2, 3; though this translator foists in the words, *in heaven*, at the end of ver. 3, and endeavors to defend the interpolation in a note, in which he says, "The sacrifice of himself—he actually offered in heaven, by appearing before the throne of God in the body wherein he suffered.—And that this was a real offering of himself a sacrifice to God, is evident from Heb. ix. 24, where we are told that Christ, after suffering death on earth, *did not enter into the holy places made with hands, the likenesses of the true holy places, but into heaven itself, there to appear before the face of God on our behalf.* And to show that, by so appearing, Christ offered himself a sacrifice to God, the apostle adds immediately (ver. 25), *not however that he should offer himself often.* Wherefore Christ's presenting himself in his crucified body before the throne of God, being a real offering of himself a sacrifice to God for us, we are said (Heb. x. 10), *to be sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.* We are again, however, referred to the note on ver 5. In that verse itself there is nothing on the subject. In the part of the note referred to, the commentator says, that "Christ—arose in the body in which he had been put to death, and entered—into *heaven itself* (Heb. ix. 24),—'by his own blood,' or death (Heb. ix. 12), which he manifested by *offering*, that is, by presenting in the presence of God, *his body* (Heb. x. 10), bearing the marks of the violence whereby he had been put to death on earth; that being the only method in which his death on earth could be manifested in heaven to the angelical hosts." He then strangely argues, "That Christ actually appeared before the presence of God in heaven in the body wherein he suffered, and that his body had then the wounds which occasioned his death, may be gathered from his showing to his dis-

ciples, on the day he arose from the dead, his hands and his feet, and his side." (!) And he quotes from Estius and Ambrose an assertion, that "the wounds which Christ's body received on the cross were kept open, in order to its being presented before the Father as crucified and slain." "If so [he concludes], the atonement being thus made, it was changed into its glorious form mentioned Phil. iii. 2." Again, at the close of a note on Heb. ix. 5, this expositor says, "Into this holy place, the habitation of the Deity, Jesus, after his ascension, entered, as the apostle assures us, ver, 12. And by presenting his crucified body there (ch. x. 10) before the manifestation of the Divine presence, called *the throne of his Majesty in the heavens*, (ch. viii. 1), he offered the sacrifice of himself to God. And having thus made atonement for the sins of the world, he procured for penitent sinners an eternal pardon (ch. ix. 12.\*)" He repeats the same assertions in notes on ch. ix. 24, and ch. x. 10.

Now all this is scarcely anything better than purely gratuitous assertion. In all the passages thus quoted or referred to by this commentator, in support of his notion that the intercession of Jesus Christ mainly consists, beside "pleading the merit of his death," in "presenting his crucified body in heaven," and "in the continual presentation of his humanity before the Father," there is only one which is at all to the purpose. This is Heb. ix. 24, which says, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." But does this in any degree amount to Dr. Macknight's pretended inference from it, that he "presented his *crucified* body there," with "the wounds which occasioned his death?" Can it be imagined, that anything *literally* answering to the carnal sacrifices of the Levitical law, and even far exceeding them in grossness, can be intended by the Apostle's statement that *Christ appears in the presence of God for us*? All such fancies must vanish into air, when it is observed, as is the truth, that, throughout this Epistle to the Hebrews or Jews, the Apostle, to meet their previous modes of thinking, points out *analogies*,—*not things the same in kind*, but things correspondingly *answering to each other in a far different sphere*,—between their temple-

worship and the services of the high-priests, and the Christian religion and the salvation of Jesus Christ. Thus the Jewish high-priest entered once a year into the holy of holies in the tabernacle and temple, to bring the worship of the people, as was considered, immediately before Jehovah, or to appear in the presence of God for them; wherefore the Apostle says, that "Christ is not entered into holy places made by hands, *which are the figures of the true*, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us;" by which he means to teach, that what the Jewish high-priest did in figure, or representatively, Jesus Christ does *really*; thus, in a totally different manner. As the holy places into which the Jewish high-priests entered "were the figures of the true, so were all things that they did or performed, in those representative ceremonies, *figures of the true*." As mortal men could no otherwise be mediums of communication between other men and God than by acts of worship and supplication, the services of the Jewish priests could only *represent* the true mediation of the Lord's Divine Humanity, which, as we have seen, is of a very different nature. When he is said, as to his Divine Humanity, to appear in the presence of God for us, it does not mean that he appears, as the mortal high-priest necessarily did, as a separate person, but that his Humanity entered into full union with his Divinity, so as to be one Person therewith, rendering approach to the Essential Divinity Itself, thus clothed with Humanity, and the communication of saving mercies therefrom, privileges thenceforth to be enjoyed by men.

After this slight review, I cannot but believe that every unprejudiced mind will admit, that there is really no Scripture evidence for the popular and gross notions of the Intercession and Advocacy of Jesus Christ. He is our Advocate with the Father, not because he prays or pleads for us, either verbally or by displaying his crucified body, but because his Divine Humanity affords to us a way of access to the Inmost Divinity, presents our God to us in a conceivable and approachable form, and efficiently dispenses to us "grace to help in every time of need." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me" [John xiv. 6]. In the Divine

Humanity of Jesus Christ, our God is offered to our adoration, not only in a conceivable and approachable form, but also in an aspect of tenderness and mercy. That Divine Principle denominated the Father, which, most specifically, is the Inmost Divine Love, is rendered apprehensible to us as Love indeed; not as a Being of wrath and vengeance, which, in our fallen and sinful state, we could not but regard him to be, were we not enabled to see him in his true character in the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ; who in this respect is truly our Advocate with and actually, according to his answer to Philip (John xiv. 9), sheweth us, the Father. It is thus that he is both our Advocate—our Paraclete, and that He hath entered into the presence of God for us. The manifestation of the presence of God in heaven, the Jews always considered to be a radiant glory of ineffable splendour, called by them Shechinah: into this presence of God, Jesus Christ, or the Divine Humanity, entered at his ascension; and there He will ever appear to the eye of true faith, manifesting our God to us such as He really is, and accepting all who approach Him in sincerity as subjects of his mercy.

II. It has already been shown in this Lecture, that as Intercession is alike attributed to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and to the Holy Spirit, by reason that they are not two distinct Persons but One; so the office of our Advocate is equally ascribed to both. But I have not yet examined any of the texts in which this title is applied to the Holy Ghost;—in other words in which he is called *the Paraclete*, for which, when so applied, our translators have used the term, *the Comforter*. I will now, therefore, proceed to make some observations on those texts, and will endeavor to show what is their true meaning, and how justly they are descriptive of the true Holy Spirit—the Life-giving and Salvation-operating Energy proceeding from the Divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have already stated, on the authority of writers of the most profound attainments in biblical literature and criticism, that “the word Paraclete” not only signifies a *Comforter*, but, more generally, a *Teacher*, and an *Interpreter of another person’s discourse or meaning*; so that the Holy Spirit, or that Divine

Power which assisted the apostles to discharge their office, is called *the Paraclete*, as being *the interpreter to the apostles of the divine will*, their *teacher and counsellor*.

In citing the texts, I shall retain the original word, in its English shape of *Paraclete*, instead of the *Comforter* given in the English Bible, and which, as we have seen, very inadequately expresses the sense of the original. The first place in which the word *Paraclete* occurs is in John xiv. 16, which I have read in the text. The Lord Jesus Christ, having previously informed his disciples that he was about to leave them, as to his personal presence, and go to his Father, says, there and in two subsequent verses, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete that he may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." What the office of this Paraclete would be, any further than that he was to be a Spirit of truth—the Truth as a Living Principle, is not here defined; but, what is of still greater importance, it is plainly stated, that he was not to be a different person from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Speaker of these words, but, under another manifestation Jesus Christ Himself. The Lord tells the disciples, that they already *knew* this other Paraclete; for that he at that time dwelt *with* them, and *should* be *in* them. Now it is certain that the Spirit of truth did not at that time dwell with them except in the person of Jesus Christ: for it is expressly said in the seventh chapter, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet given." They then well knew Jesus Christ as to his outward person, in which He at that time dwelt with them, and in which the Spirit, that descended on Him at his baptism, dwelt with them also: but the Spirit did not proceed out of the person of Jesus Christ, so as to be *in* the disciples, as is here promised *should* be the case, till his Humanity was glorified. In saying, therefore, that the disciples then *knew* this other Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, for that he dwelt with them, the Lord Jesus Christ identifies the Spirit as one with Himself. But He puts their oneness beyond all doubt, when He immediately adds, in the plainest terms,

"I will not leave you comfortless (the original word probably means *destitute*—like orphans): *I* will come to you." Thus He first tells his disciples that He would send them "another Paraclete;" and then He explains that this will be, not another person, but Himself, under another mode of manifestation,—not as a person dwelling *with* them, but as a Spirit abiding *in* them. "I will not leave you destitute,—like fatherless children,—*I* will come to you."

This "other Paraclete," then, is, indisputably, no other than Jesus Christ Himself, dwelling in his people by his Spirit—his Divine Proceeding—his Out-flowing, Life-giving Energy: well therefore may a title be given to this Spirit—the title of *the Paraclete*—which is also given to Jesus Christ Himself.

The next passage where the Paraclete is mentioned, is in the 26th verse of the same chapter. Jesus having first said, (ver. 25), "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you," there adds, "But the Paraclete, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Here it is expressly taught, that the Paraclete is a Teacher and a Remembrancer. What he brings to remembrance are the things verbally spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ, and, generally, his Word at large; and what he teaches is, the true meaning of all that is necessary or expedient for us to know.

The third mention of the *Paraclete* occurs in the next or 15th chapter of John, ver. 26. The Lord having previously spoken of his being hated by the Jews, there says, "But when the Paraclete is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Here again the Paraclete is spoken of as a teacher, and as a demonstrator of the truth respecting the nature and person of Him who sends him—the Lord Jesus Christ.

The last place in which the word Paraclete is applied to the Holy Ghost, and the last in which it occurs at all except the passage in John's 1st Epistle, in which Jesus Christ is said to be our Paraclete with the Father, is in the next chapter of John's gospel, in which this discourse of the Lord Jesus Christ with his

chosen disciples is continued and concluded. The Divine Instructor there again says (ver. 7, 8), "It is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Paraclete will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." A reprover is also a teacher, who reminds people of their duty, and of their failures in performing it.

What, be it asked in passing, is the reason, that, as the Lord here declares, if He should not go away, the Paraclete would not come? It is because his going away, or, as he elsewhere states it, his going to the Father, means, the rising of his Humanity to full union with the Essential Divinity ; and it is only from his Humanity thus united perfectly with his Divinity, and made itself Divine, that the Divine Operative Energy called the Holy Spirit can proceed, and dispense the grace adapted to enlighten the minds, amend the hearts, and thus accomplish the regeneration and salvation, of degenerate, carnal-minded men. Well then might the Lord Jesus Christ say to his first chosen disciples, and through them to us all, "It is expedient for you that I go away!" Had he not thus gone away—had not his frail human person taken from the mother disappeared from the world, and the Divine Humanity from the Father been brought into ultimates in its place, and had He not herein risen to perfect oneness with the Father himself—the Essential Divinity (as formerly shown in the Lecture on that subject),—the Divine enlightening, purifying, elevating and saving helps, graces, and energies, called those of the Holy Spirit, could never have reached us, and we must ever have remained aliens from the kingdom of God.

From these four passages relating to the sending of the Paraclete—the Spirit of Truth, compared with each other, another important observation may be made : I mean, as to the gradual manner in which the Divine Speaker opens the truth, that the Holy Spirit is sent by Him from the Father ;—in other words, that it proceeds *out of* the Divine Humanity from the Essential Divinity. Let us again pass them under review, to note this circumstance.

In the first passage the Lord says "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete." Here the Lord re-



presents the Father as giving the Paraclete, and Himself as only contributing to the blessing by asking for it. (The original word here rendered "pray," does not, it should be observed, mean to pray, as an act of worship, but simply to ask or request.) The reason of this statement is, because by asking is not here meant literally *to make a request*, as of one person to another, *but to open a communication*, as of the body with its soul, so as that the latter should descend by influx into the former. This the Lord did by glorifying his Humanity, so as that it became One Person with the Essential Divinity. When this was completed, all the fulness of the Godhead, as Paul expresses it (Col. ii. 9), then dwelling bodily in the Humanity, the aids of the Holy Spirit could thence be given or go forth, fully adapted to work their saving purposes.

Perhaps it may be thought, that the Lord's here saying that he would pray or ask the Father to give his disciples the Paraclete, contradicts his statement in chapter xvi. 26, that he would not, "at that day," pray or ask the Father for his disciples, noticed in the preceding Lecture. But there is no contradiction at all. When he says, in the passage before us, that He would ask the Father, who would then give the Holy Ghost, He promises that He would open the communication of the Divinity with the Humanity, so as that the quickening Energy might thence be dispensed, by the full glorification of the latter, which was not yet completely effected: whereas, when he states that "at that day," He says not that He would "pray or ask the Father," the phrase, "at that day," refers to the state when the glorification should be fully accomplished, and the Holy Ghost in consequence given; by virtue of which, as He says, the Father himself would love them because they loved Him—the Divine Humanity,—and believed that He came out from God—that his Divine Humanity proceeded from his Essential Divinity.

But if, in the first passage, the Lord only speaks of the Father's giving the Paraclete at *His* request,—in the second passage he adverts to the truth respecting the procession of the Holy Ghost a little more openly. He there speaks of "the Paraclete, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send *in my name*." In the literal sense, indeed, it is not easy to see

what is meant by the Father's sending the Holy Ghost in the Son's name. Commentators mostly say that it means, *in his place*,—as *his agent or representative*; and Bishop Pearce boldly says, it is so expressed, "because Jesus himself was to send him from the Father," as is afterwards stated. Yet this does not explain the phrase, "whom the Father will send in my name." But *name*, in the Word of God, always signifies nature, or quality. Jesus Christ was literally the name of the Lord's Divine Humanity,—his Human Nature; wherefore, when his "name" is mentioned, though all his attributes are included, his Divine Humanity is principally signified. To send, then, the Holy Ghost in the name of Jesus Christ, is to cause the Divine life-giving influences and energies signified by the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Lord's Divine Humanity, so modified thereby as to be adapted to operate on the human nature of man in his natural condition and state. Thus, for the Father to send the Holy Ghost in the name of Jesus Christ, is, in reality, as Dr. Pearce in some degree perceived, the same thing as for Jesus Christ to send the Holy Spirit from the Father.

This, in the third passage (ch. xv. 26), Jesus plainly declares that He will do. "When the Paraclete is come [He says], whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father. If the Spirit of truth proceeds from the Father immediately, how is it that the Son sends it to men? Because, as proceeding immediately from the Father, nothing is capable of receiving it but the Lord's Divine Humanity. This modifies it so as to be accommodated for reception by man, and dispenses it to human subjects to accomplish its light-and-life-giving works.

And in the fourth and last passage, Jesus repeats the same blessed assurance, but without mention of any other giver and sender of the Holy Spirit but Himself: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Paraclete will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" [ch. xvi. 7]. From whom is it possible that the Lord Jesus can send the Paraclete, but from Himself? If the Father is a Divine Being or Person distinct from Jesus Christ, and prior in order, as commonly imagined, how can the latter—the Son—send the

Spirit from the former—his Father? But if the Father is the Essential Divinity and the Divine Soul, and the Son is the Divine Humanity and Divine Body; and if, as the apostle assures us, “in Jesus Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:” then, the union being complete—the intercommunion perfect,—it obviously is the true and only order, that the Son or Divine Humanity should send, or cause to proceed, the Spirit or Divine Operative Energy, from the Father—the All-originating Divinity,—as dwelling in all possible fulness in Himself, and constituting, with Himself, One only Divine Person.

Thus, by four distinct steps, the Lord Jesus Christ, in these four statements respecting the sending and coming of the Paraclete, enunciates the grand truths upon the subject: that the Paraclete or Spirit of truth is sent by Him from the Father,—or that the Divine Operative Energy proceeds *out of* the Divine Humanity *from* the Essential Divinity: and that this is, in reality, a sending or proceeding from Himself alone, all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Him.

But, in connexion with the passage last considered, must be taken the magnificent declaration which, after a few intervening verses on the Paraclete’s reproving the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, follows in series with it, and which throws a most brilliant light upon the whole subject: “Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth shall come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and show it unto you.”

It certainly is true, that the Spirit of truth—the Paraclete—is here spoken of as if he were a distinctly existing person; yet, when what is said of him is considered, who can suppose, that we are therefore to conclude, that he is so spoken of, because he really *is* a distinct person, and not, rather, as the Personification of a Principle? Can it be imagined, that if he were really a distinct Divine Person, coequal with the Father and the Son, and possessing all the attributes of Divinity as essentially and

actually as they, that it could be said of him, "He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak?" If a distinctly existing Being or Person of any kind, what could he be, to answer to such a description of him, but a mere automaton—a passive machine—a thing which of itself is nothing, and which is solely actuated by the will and mind of another? When, therefore, Jesus says of him, "He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak," does He not in effect inform us, that, of himself, the Holy Spirit is nothing—that he has no separate existence whatever: thus that, in reality, the Holy Spirit is no distinct person, but is the Lord Himself, considered as dwelling in his people—as communicating with, operating upon, and imparting enlightening and saving aids and influences to, the minds of men? To *hear*, spiritually understood, and in such application, is to receive influx from something higher, and to *speak* is to impart it again to something lower: thus it is descriptive of the Lord Himself, considered as proceeding as it were out of Himself, or putting forth from Himself an operative Sphere, and thereby dwelling in the minds of men, communicating to them heavenly life and light, and operating saving graces in their souls. It is not any separate Spirit—any distinct Divine Person, that accomplishes this; but is the Lord Himself, putting forth his Love and Wisdom as a Proceeding Sphere, thereby entering by influx into man, and enabling man to take therefrom all that his state admits, and that is profitable for his salvation.

The Lord explains this more plainly when He adds, still speaking of the Holy Spirit, "He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." Thus what the Spirit of God—the Divine Paraclete, shows, or manifests, or makes apprehensible to man, is all a portion of the inexhaustible riches and perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ: therefore all that is thus communicated to man, tends to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, as making Him known to us as the Author of all our mercies—of all the graces and blessings of which we ever can be made partakers,—of all the means of salvation, and of our eternal felicity. Whatever the Holy Ghost imparts to us, he takes and brings forth out of the fulness of all excellences

which belong to, and make up the nature of, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom, according to the Apostle's words, "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." This work of the Holy Ghost clearly answers to that meaning of the word Paraclete which we have noticed, as denoting *an interpreter of another person's discourse or meaning*. This is one of the functions of a human Paraclete. But the Divine Paraclete, not being a Person separate from the Lord Jesus Christ, but his Proceeding and operating Energy, is Himself as accommodating his purely Divine attributes and excellences to man's capacity of apprehension and reception, and thus enabling man to comprehend, according to his finite ability, those Divine qualities and perfections, which, as they exist in the Lord Himself, are infinite and unsearchable. Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies, in our estimation, the Lord Jesus Christ: for he takes of the things that are His, and shows or manifests them unto us.

But how is it that in Jesus Christ all these excellences—these purely divine perfections exist? He himself anticipates this inquiry, and explicitly answers it: for He concludes his instructions on the subject by saying, "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and show it unto you." How could any fuller or grander declaration possibly be made, than that all divine attributes without any exception,—all the attributes and perfections of the Supreme, Essential, and Inmost Divinity,—belong to the Lord Jesus Christ? All things whatever—(for the expression is universal)—"All things (whatever) that the Father hath, are mine." Nor is this majestic assumption of all the perfections of Deity, as belonging to Himself, the only saying of the kind made by the Lord Jesus Christ. In his last address to the Father, in the next chapter (xvii. 10), He says, "All mine are thine, and thine are mine;" where the words mine and thine do not mean persons, or men, only, but *all things whatever*, all the terms being, in the original, in the neuter gender. The meaning is, that the Father and Son, that is, the Divinity and the Humanity, when the latter was glorified or made Divine, being perfectly united, so as to constitute one Person, like the soul and the body, all the attributes of the one belong equally to the other. Thus man's soul and body,

consequently everything belonging to each respectively, are no less, by virtue of their union, the property of the other. Man's soul, with all its powers, belongs to his body, for it is from the soul that the body derives all its life and powers of action; and man's body, with all its powers, belongs to his soul, for it is by means of the body that the soul produces all that it operates and manifests of itself in the world. Thus, according to the words of our text, all things that the Father hath belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ, and it being of the things belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit takes to manifest to mankind; it follows that in the Divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his Spirit or Proceeding Life and Operation, we have, or may have, communion with the whole Divinity—with all the attributes and perfections that constitute the Divine Nature, and may thence receive in all abundance everything that is necessary to secure our salvation.

In this sublime statement then, of our Divine Saviour, we find one of the passages of the Word of God, which conclusively substantiate the true doctrine of the Mediation, the Intercession, and the Advocacy, of Jesus Christ, as that doctrine has been explained in our preceding Lectures. The Divine Humanity of the Lord is that which acts as a Medium between the unapproachable and inconceivable Divine Essence and man in his natural state, and which, therefore, fulfils all the functions *truly* described as those of the Mediation, the intercession, and the Advocateship, or Paracleteship, of Jesus Christ. In that Divine Humanity, as we have abundantly seen, and as the Apostle Paul assures us, dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; which is the same truth as Jesus Christ announces to us in the text—that all things that the Father hath are His. In him, then, or in his Divine Humanity, we have communication and communion with “all that is called God” (again to use apostolic language)—with every thing that can be conceived of as Divine: and all is shown, manifested, and conveyed to us by that “other Paraclete,” the Holy Spirit; whose operation and agency, thus whose Intercession and Advocacy, are no other than those of the Lord Jesus Christ, considered as dwelling and working in man by the proceeding Sphere and Energy of his Divine Life,—his

Love and Wisdom—adapted to the state and necessities, thus to the capacity of reception, of all who look to Him, or who admit its operation.

This then, brethren, is what we have to do—what the Jews are reprehended because they would not do—to come unto the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may have life. The life which he dispenses is spiritual life—the life by which the soul shall live happy in eternity. This can only be imparted to those, who believe in, and love Him, and who keep his commandments. This He perpetually insists on through the whole series of this discourse, in which He promises the help of his Holy Spirit. He introduces the whole subject with saying (ch. xiv. 15), “If ye love me, keep my commandments:” and with this He connects the promise, “*And* I will request the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever.” So, just afterwards, and also just before He mentions the Paraclete the second time, he says, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.—If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” *How* the Father also will love such a person, and, together with Jesus, will come to him, and make abode with him, may be understood from what we have already explained—the Father and Jesus, after the latter was glorified, being indissolubly One Person, and all things of the Father—of the Essential Divinity, belonging equally to the Son—to the Divine Humanity. Let us then diligently strive to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ, and thus to love Him in a practical manner,—for no other sort of love for Him can He acknowledge. So shall we know, that in his Divine Humanity as the blessed Medium, we shall have communion with the Father also. The Father also will love us. And the whole will be testified and sealed to our souls by the Paraclete,—the Holy Spirit—the Operative life and energy of the Divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## LECTURE XX.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE-PROOFS OF THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE  
MEDIATION, INTERCESSION AND ADVOCATESHIP OF JESUS  
CHRIST.

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JOHN xvi. 14, 15.

*"He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."*

IN three preceding Lectures, I have entered rather fully into inquiries respecting the doctrine of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ, with a view of showing what is the genuine truth in regard to that important doctrine, and how it is to be understood, so as to be in harmony with the immovable truths of the unity of God, in Person as well as in Essence, and of the unchangeable benevolence of the inmost Divine Nature. In the second of those Lectures we examined all the passages of Scripture in which the words Mediator and Intercessor are made use of: and we found that they yield no support, to the popular erroneous views of the subject, but are beautifully in harmony with, and conclusively establish, the true. As to be *our Advocate* is the same thing as to make *intercession* for us, and this, also, is once said of the Lord Jesus Christ, and four times, by the use in the original of the same word, (which, anglicized, is the *Paraclete*), is employed as a title of the Holy Spirit (when the translators of the English Bible have rendered it the *Comforter*); we have also examined all the passages in which that word occurs, both in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ and to his Holy Spirit. We have ascertained from the whole, that Mediation, Intercession, and Advocacy, are applied to Jesus



Christ, not to signify that He, as one Divine Person, intercedes, in the way of pleading and intreaty, with another Divine Person, but because his Divine Humanity is the Grand Medium by which man has access to God, and by which the means of salvation, and all the aids of which man stands in need for his spiritual welfare, are communicated from God to man; and that the same offices of intercession and advocacy, by the same original words, are also ascribed to the Holy Ghost, not because he, as a third Divine Person, either pleads in the way of intreating with God for man, or, as such a distinct person, acts towards man either as an instructor or as a consoler, but because the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, is a name to signify the divine Energy and Operation of the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ; so that it amounts, in effect, to the same thing, whether Jesus Christ, as the name of the Lord's Divine Humanity, be said to act as our Intercessor and Advocate, or rather as our *Paraclete*, (that being a more comprehensive expression,) or whether the Holy Spirit be said to act as such. The Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the Medium by which man has communication with the Inmost Divinity, and the Holy Spirit is the Divine Operative Energy by which Jesus Christ dwells in man, and imparts to him the aids and graces by which we are enlightened, reformed, and saved.

In addition to an examination of the whole of the Scripture-testimony on these points, as regards the texts in which the words *Mediator*, *Intercessor*, and *Paraclete*, occur, I had stated it to be my wish to consider some of the texts in which the true doctrine of the Mediation, Intercession, and Paracleteship, of Jesus Christ, is plainly conveyed, although the words are not mentioned. I was only able to do this in our last, without extending that Lecture to a most unreasonable length, with respect to one passage, being that which I have now, to connect this Lecture with the former, read as a text. And although, in resuming this inquiry, I may be deemed to be extending the subject of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ to a disproportionate length, I trust that the great importance of it, as a key to the doctrine of the Atonement, and whatever else is regarded as belonging to the peculiar doctrines of the gospel,

will plead my excuse, if in the present, as a short supplementary Lecture, I say a little more to complete my design.

In the passage that I have read as a text, Jesus Christ says, speaking of the Paraclete the Spirit of truth, "He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, he shall receive of mine and show it unto you."

How clearly this establishes the unity as to Person of Jesus Christ with the Father, and with the Spirit also, we pointed out in our last; and it must be obvious to every unprejudiced mind upon the bare perusal of the words: yet a few additional remarks upon it may not be unacceptable.

"All things that the Father hath," saith the Lord Jesus Christ, "are mine." All acknowledge the Father to be the Inmost Divinity, whether they view him as existing separately, as to Person, from the Lord Jesus Christ, or not. All things that the Father hath, are all things that he possesses, both in regard to his intrinsic attributes and the immensity of his productions. All worlds are his; all the heavens are his; the whole universe, both mundane and celestial, is his; and his are all the inconceivable powers, perfections, and infinite excellences, from which all derive existence, and subsistence also,—from which they were produced at first, and are still permanently upheld; all which may be referred to Infinite Love, Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Power. Everything that I have now asserted is disputed by none. Christian, Jew, and Heathen,—those even who deny revelation as well as those who accept it,—all human beings whatever who believe in a God at all,—all equally acknowledge, that to the Supreme Divinity belong, as his property, to dispose of at his will, all things which exist throughout the immensity of worlds, both visible and invisible; and, by necessary consequence, all the inconceivable divine attributes and perfections from and by which such wonderful things exist. Yet, saith Jesus Christ, most plainly and simply, "All things that the Father hath are mine." Carry your thoughts to all the immensity of the divine works of which you have any knowledge or can form any sort of idea: rise, if you

can, to some conception of the amazing divine powers and perfections which first produced and perpetually sustain them all: and then listen with reverence to the words of Jesus Christ when he says, All these things are mine: for you acknowledge without controversy that all these things belong to the Supreme Divinity, whom you believe to be called the Father: and "All things that the Father hath, are mine." How can this be possible, if the Father is one Divine Person, and the Son another? But how easily is it conceivable, when we regard the Father as the Essential Divinity, and the Son as the Divine Humanity, and consider their relation to each other to be like that of man's body and soul!

By its union with the soul, the body possesses all the powers of the soul: by its union with the body, the soul possesses all the powers of the body. Without the body, the soul, in regard to the world, would be nothing at all: without the soul, the body would be absolutely nothing at all: by means of the body, the soul puts forth its powers of action, and even manifests its thoughts and affections: and from the soul, the body derives all the capacity of producing effects on persons and things, and of manifesting thought and feeling, by which a living body is distinguished from a mass of unorganized matter.

Well, then: as we have repeatedly stated before: as the body is the natural medium by which the soul both produces effects, and is made cognisant of what exists and passes in the world; so the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the Divine Medium, by which the Divine Life-giving Energies go forth to operate for the salvation of mankind; and by which the wants and aspirations of frail and suffering man, rise, so to speak, to the Divine sensorium, and draw down the aids of divinely communicated grace, without which he could not but perish. The Divine Humanity is the Medium by which all this is accomplished—not a passive Medium but an infinitely active one, as having all things that belong to the Inmost Divinity—all the fulness of the Godhead, dwelling bodily in itself, and thence dispensing all, according to man's necessities and capacities of reception, to the human subjects of Divine Benevolence. And this the Divine Humanity accomplishes, by putting forth from itself a sphere of Operative

Energy for the purpose; which is, as we have seen, what is denominated the Paraclete and the Spirit of truth, or the Holy Spirit; and which, being solely the Operative Energy of Jesus Christ, by which, in fact, He Himself makes an abode in the souls of men, is therefore described as being nothing whatever distinct from Him who puts it forth, and which, though personified in the form of the divine speech, is discovered, by the plain meaning of that speech, to possess no attributes of a distinct person whatever. For of no being possessing the necessary attributes of distinct personality could it be said, "He shall not speak of *himself*, but whatsoever he shall *hear*, that shall he speak. He shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." Most plainly, then, the Holy Spirit is the Divine Sphere of influence and agency proceeding from Jesus Christ, conveying the gifts of his grace, which are modifications of his Infinite Love and Wisdom—thus taking of the things that are His,—and dispensing, manifesting, or showing them to his people. And what the Spirit thus takes and shows of the things of Jesus Christ, are also the things of the Father,—of the Inmost Divinity, dwelling bodily in his Humanity, by which the otherwise inconceivable things of the Infinite God, are so modified, as to be made conceivable and communicable to man.

In this magnificent declaration, then, of the Lord Jesus Christ, we see clearly propounded, and firmly substantiated, the doctrine which we have stated as that of the True Christian Religion on the Mediation,—which is the same thing as the Intercession, as this is the same thing with the Advocacy or Paracleteship,—of Jesus Christ;—He is called our Mediator, because his Divine Humanity comes between the Infinite, inconceivable, Divine Essence, and man in his natural state, and is the Medium by and from which, operating by his Spirit or Divine proceeding Energy, He conveys the graces in which is salvation to the hearts and minds of men.

I will now proceed to notice some other passages in this gospel of John,—always acknowledged to be at once the most sublime and clear in the discoveries that it makes respecting the Divine Person and Character of the Lord Jesus Christ,—which also involve the same great truth.

This gospel, then, points to the Mediatory Office of the Lord Jesus Christ in the very first sentences which it enunciates. It commences with saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Here the Eternal Logos, called the Word which in the beginning was with God, and which was God, is presented as the Divine Medium, by which the Infinite Divine Esse first proceeded forth in order to the production of finite existences. Without the putting forth of such a Medium, which always inherently existed in the Divine Essence, as Wisdom or Truth in most perfect union with Love or Good, and to which the Lord refers when, addressing the Father from his yet not perfectly glorified Humanity, He says, "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" [John xvii. 5];—without, I say, the putting forth of such a Divine Medium, no creation could have been produced, nor, supposing it to have been brought into existence, could any communication have been maintained between the work and its Author. Yet this is not what is called in Scripture the Mediator, and of which so much is said respecting the Lord's gracious works in that character: to become such, the Word was to be "made flesh" [John i. 14]—was to assume a natural humanity by birth of a human mother, and so to put on a form adapted to open and maintain an intercourse with the minds and souls of men in a natural, and that fallen, condition of existence. When this, according to the Lord's own prayer just quoted, was glorified—that is, made Divine,—with the Father's own self,—so as to be perfectly united with the Essential Divinity,—so that Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate, returned, with and as to his Humanity, into *the glory which he had with the Father*, as the Eternal Logos, *before the world was*, then He truly became what is called the Mediator,—the Medium for re-opening the communication between the Infinite God and fallen man, and for dispensing to the degenerate creature the saving grace of his Creator.

The next text in which the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of,

according to what we have seen is the true doctrine of his Mediation and Intercession, as the Medium of making known to man the nature and perfections of the incomprehensible God also occurs in the first chapter of this gospel of John (ver 18). The evangelist there says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Here it is expressly affirmed—what reason also sees to be unquestionably true—that no man hath seen God at any time,—that God, as he is in himself, (for this is obviously the meaning), is both naturally and spiritually, beyond all ken of finite vision,—incapable of being seen by the eye, and no less incapable of being comprehended by what the eye corresponds to, the human understanding. But at the same time, it is stated respecting this invisible and inconceivable God, that the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. The only begotten Son is manifestly the Lord Jesus Christ—the Word made flesh—as to his Divine Humanity; and he is said to be in the bosom of the Father to express the intimate and perfect union between the Divine Humanity and the Essential Divinity. Of this Son, then,—the Divine Humanity,—it is divinely affirmed, that He hath declared the unseen, incomprehensible God. And this does not mean that Jesus Christ has declared, or made the Father known, by his words, doctrine, or teaching, but that in Him the Father is presented as visible and comprehensible. The original word which our translators have rendered *declared*, strictly means, to *make manifest*—to *bring forth or present to view*: so that when the evangelist says that the Son hath manifested the Father or brought him forth to view, he says exactly the same thing as was declared by Jesus Himself, on more than one occasion, that he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father [John xiv. 7, 9, ch. xii. 45]. What then is this but saying very plainly, that the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the Adorable Medium, in and by which both the nature and the Person of the whole Godhead are manifested to human apprehension, and in and by which, consequently, man may have communion with, and receive blessing from, the otherwise inaccessible God, and be enabled to view Him as what He is,

a God of Grace and love? This then is another text which establishes what the New Church offers as the true view of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ.

The next passage which we will notice as affirming this doctrine is in the sixth chapter. In his discourse there with the cavilling Jews about the bread of life, after having said, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him," the Lord Jesus Christ adds this seemingly paradoxical statement (ver. 57): "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." When He says, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father," He teaches that, as to his Divine Humanity, He proceedeth forth from the Essential Divinity; and that the life of his Humanity was the essential life of the Father; according to his saying in another place, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" [ch. v. 26]. He claims *to live by the Father*,—to have the Father for his life,—and thus to have, by gift, that is, derivation, from the Father, life in himself, which means essential life; being what no created being can possibly receive or enjoy. But the essential life of the Father, after being modified by the Divine Humanity, is communicated as spiritual life to those who acknowledge, and receive good from, Him: which is meant when He adds, "So he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." To eat the Lord Jesus Christ—that is, his flesh, as he had just before said,—is, as explained in our Lecture on Salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, to receive and appropriate, so as to incorporate, in a manner, into one's spiritual frame, the Lord's divine good, as dispensed from his Divine Humanity, and thus accommodated to man's reception; and to live by Him, is to have Him for our life, thus, as he had said just before, to have eternal life—a life of good, truth, and consequent happiness, for evermore.

Still then, we see, the Lord Jesus Christ presents Himself, as being every thing to those who look to Him,—the Author, to them, of eternal life and all saving good,—because He receives in his Divine Humanity the essential life of the Father or Inmost Divinity, and has, for *his* life, the Infinite Divine Essence Itself.

The whole Godhead, with all its fulness (which is a Scripture phrase for the whole contents of anything—for all that it includes), dwelling bodily in his Divine Humanity, this acts as a Medium for dispensing to man everything of good and blessing that he can possibly enjoy.

But the discourse of the Lord with his disciples on the eve of his crucifixion, with the address to his Father which follows it comprehending together four chapters; as it contains his most express statements about the Paraclete or Spirit of truth, so does it also contain several other passages, beside the one which I have taken as a text and have considered already, in which He speaks of Himself, or of his Divine Humanity, as being the Medium of communication between man and his God, so as to substantiate all that we have advanced on the true doctrine of the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ. Thus He says (ch. xiv. 6), "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Is not this a plain declaration, that only in Him—in his Divine Humanity—can we ever find the Father—the Essential Divinity?—that his Humanity is the only Medium by which we can have access to and communicate with, the Infinite Godhead?—the only Source, to us, of truth, and of life? Well, therefore, may He add, "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: and henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." How can knowing Jesus be, to know the Father also;—how can seeing Jesus be, seeing the Father likewise;—unless the one is in the other, forming one Person therewith, as the soul is in the body, constituting with it one person?—all demonstrating that the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the Blessed Medium, in and by which we may know, and derive blessing from, the Essential Divinity. All is reiterated and still more earnestly enforced in the answer which the Lord made to Philip, who, not understanding the plain statement he had just heard, said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus replied, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" What can this mean, if it does not mean, that in the Divine Humanity of Jesus



Christ, all that is called the Father, the very Divine Essence, is made apprehensible to those who approach God therein—is the Divine Medium in and by which all the Godhead is revealed to human apprehension?

In all the other passages which bear upon this subject, Jesus, in the same manner, always represents himself—that is, his Divine Humanity,—as being the Medium or Agent in communicating with man; though He constantly intimates, that it is from the Father, and by virtue of his perfect union with the Father, and of the Father's dwelling in Him, that he is the Author to man of all his mercies. He continually presents Himself as the doer; and when He ascribes what is done to the Father, it is always to the Father *in his name*, which means, the Father *in his Divine Humanity*. Thus He says (ch. xiv. 13, 14), "Whatsoever ye shall ask *in my name* that will I do; that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing *in my name*, I will do it." The Father is glorified in the Son, when man is enabled to form some not altogether inadequate ideas of the divine perfections, and sense of the divine mercies, as manifested to him by the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ: and this is accomplished when God is approached in the Lord's Divine Humanity.

"At that day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" [ver. 20]. Here we are taught, that the Divine Humanity is in perfect union with the Essential Divinity; but that it is with the Divine Humanity that the members of his church have union or conjunction; and that it is from the Divine Humanity, as abiding in them by his Spirit, that they receive all their blessings.

"When the Paraclete is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" [ch. xv. 26]. This passage was sufficiently explained in our last: I advert to it again, to point out how plainly it affirms, that the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is that, out of which the Spirit or Paraclete proceeds; and that what this communicates is, the perfections of the Essential Divinity as modified, and adapted to man's capacity of reception, and thus to accomplish his salva-

tion, by the Divine Humanity: "The Paraclete whom *I* will send unto you *from the Father*:" to send is, in divine language, to cause to proceed, as a ray of light from its source, or a stream from its fountain.

To the same effect are several expressions in the subsequent address to the Father, which for brevity, we will only just mention. "Thou hast given him [thy Son] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him:" [ch. xvii. 2]—thus the Son,—the Divine Humanity, dispenses the power residing in it from the Essential Divinity, and gives eternal life to all that are saved. The Divine Humanity is the Medium that communicates all to them.

"*I* have manifested thy name to the men which thou gavest me out of the world" [ver. 6]. The Divine Humanity makes known the attributes of the Essential Divinity to all who become subjects of salvation.

"*I* have given unto them, the words which *thou* gavest me" [ver. 8.]. The Divine Humanity communicates to the members of the church the truths which are in it from the Essential Divinity. So [ver. 14], "*I* have given them *thy* word."

"As *thou* hast sent me into the world, even so, have *I* also sent them into the world" [ver. 18]. The Divine Humanity proceeded forth from the Essential Divinity into the ultimates of Human Nature; and it is the Divine Humanity as the indispensable Medium, not the Essential Divinity immediately from itself, that sends forth the teachers of divine truth, together with the truths to be taught, for the recovery of the world to God.

"The glory which *thou* gavest *me*, *I* have given them, that they may be one, even as we are" [ver. 22]. Glory spiritually signifies divine truth in spiritual light. This, in its essence, is in the Divine Humanity from the Essential Divinity, and is thence imparted, in a modified form adapted to reception by man, to the church in the world; and, when vitally received (strange as such a thing may seem to our merely natural apprehensions), it unites all such receivers into one body, so that, in heaven, every such harmonious society actually appears, when viewed at a distance, as composing one human form.

"*I* in them, and *thou* in me; that they may be made perfect

in one" [ver. 23]. A most plain declaration, that it is Jesus Christ, or the Divine Humanity, which communicates with, and dwells in, the living members of the church; and that *He* communicates to them all the graces and blessings which they enjoy, because the Essential Divinity is *in Him*, and thus "all things that the Father hath are *his*."

"I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith *thou* hast loved *me* may be in them, and *I* in them" [ver. 26]. The Divine Humanity manifests the perfections and attributes of the Essential Divinity to the members of the church, dispenses to them, modified so as to be adequate to their capacity of reception, the love which is received by the Divine Humanity from the Essential Divinity in all its infinite fervour, and thus dwells Himself, with his truth as well as love, in the inmost souls of his people.

In the other gospels, as is well known, the Lord Jesus Christ has not made such plain and numerous discoveries in regard to his own person and his relation to the Father, as we find in the gospel of John; yet there is a revelation in Matthew and in Luke which differs very little, either in clearness or in purport, from the grand one with which I commenced this examination—that which I read as the text. In Matthew (ch. xi. 27), Jesus says, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." In Luke it is given (ch. x. 22), "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." Here the declaration, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father," is equivalent in sense, though not quite so strongly expressed, to the Lord's statement in our text, "All things that the Father hath are mine." When He says, "No man knoweth the Son, —or, who the Son is,—but the Father," He asserts the Divinity of his Humanity; for He asserts that his nature, as to his Humanity, to which belongs the title of the Son, is incomprehensible to any lower an intelligence than that of the Inmost Divinity, which cannot be true of any human nature which is

not, at the same time, Divine; and it is only as to his Divine Human Nature that Jesus could say, either that all things that the Father hath are His, or that all things are delivered unto Him of the Father. No nature lower than Divine could possibly be receptive of *all things* from the Father, any more than He could claim all things belonging to the Father as his own. Neither could any Nature lower than Divine know or comprehend the Father or the Essential Divinity, or know who the Father is,—comprehend all that constitutes the Nature of the Infinite God. Jesus, however, declares, that He, the Son, thus knows the Father: and He declares further, that He reveals the Father—the Inmost Divinity—to finite human beings, and enables them to conceive such just ideas of God, and to have such salutary and blissful communion with him, as would otherwise be beyond all merely human capacity. And the whole declaration, equally with the others which we have passed under review, demonstrates the true nature of the Mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. It shows, that his Divine Humanity receives in itself all that belongs to, and constitutes, the Essential Divinity, or has dwelling in it all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and communicates such lights and graces, aids and influences, to man, as reveal to him all of God that a finite being, and *that* a being in a natural state of existence, can possibly receive. That such a being might receive it at all, it must be presented in a form accommodated to his state and nature, and consequent capacity of reception; and such accommodation can only be effected, by its being dispensed from the Lord's Divine Humanity.

This list of passages might be considerably increased: but we will conclude. I have recited enough to show, that the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, the Divine Humanity in most perfect union with the Essential Divinity, is the Being or Person with whom alone man has to deal in the affairs of his soul, He being the Manifested Form of the whole Godhead, and the Divine Medium by which all salutary gifts and saving graces are communicated to mankind, and in and by which alone man has access to the Infinite God: and that it is in this sense that He is called our Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate or Paraclete.

Let us then, brethren, ever wait on Him in humble adoration, seeking to derive from Him the just apprehension of divine truth, the communication of saving mercies from his infinite fullness, and the life of love and obedience ; never forgetting, that to strive, looking to Him for the requisite ability, to render such obedience, is the only way in which all other graces can take root and grow in our hearts, and by which we can attain to life everlasting.

## LECTURE XXI.

THE ATONEMENT: WHAT IS ITS REAL NATURE; AND HOW IT IS IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES OF ABSOLUTE UNITY AND IMMUTABLE LOVE, AND WITH THE CONCENTRATION OF THE WHOLE TRINITY IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

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EXOD. xxxii. 30.

*"And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin."*

WE now come, my friends and brethren, in the course of Lectures which I have been for some time engaged in delivering on the most important doctrines of what we believe to be the true Christian Religion, expressly and directly to a subject to which several of our late Lectures bore reference, and which is generally viewed as the most important of all that the Christian Religion includes; and that is, the doctrine of the Atonement. In all places of worship whose ministers claim to be peculiarly evangelical, nothing is so continually heard of from the pulpit as the grand Atonement for the sins of mankind; and though a great part of the clergy of the Church of England do but sparingly introduce it, they regard it, nevertheless, as the primary article of the Christian faith. From the most unlettered mechanic who occupies himself, at intervals, with preaching what he believes to be the gospel, to the highest dignitaries of the Established Church, the Atonement, if not preached with equal frequency, is regarded as the most essential doctrine of Christianity; and so much do the ruling powers of the state

agree in this opinion, that Dr. Magee's work on Atonement and Sacrifice, the most laborious publication on the subject that has appeared in modern times, was rewarded by the elevation of its author to an archiepiscopal throne.

Highly important, in itself, most unquestionably, the subject is ; and the more necessary, consequently, it is, that the conceptions formed respecting it should be agreeable to Divine Truth. Here, then, you will excuse me if I repeat once more, what I have observed in the introduction to several of our former Lectures, that you must allow me to assume as true the points of doctrine respecting the Divine Nature and Person which were proved at length in the first part of this series of Discourses. You must permit me to assume that the Essential Nature of Deity is Infinite Love and Wisdom, and that no attributes can have place in God which are in contradiction to these. You must also allow me to hold as incontrovertible, the Absolute Unity of the Divine Nature and Person—such a Unity, indeed, as does not exclude a Trinity ; but *that* must be such a Trinity as does not divide the Godhead into three separately existing subsistences. You must permit me still to maintain, that as man, it is solemnly declared in Scripture, was created in the image and likeness of God, he must be an image of God as to the Trinity in his nature as well as in being a form capable of receiving love and wisdom by derivation from their Infinite Fountain in Him : thus that, as man consists of a soul, a body, and the power of operating, from his soul and body in union, on persons and things around him ; so the Trinity in God consists of the Divine Essence, answering to the soul in man, called in Scripture the Father, the Manifestation of that Essence in a manner to be apprehensible to finite beings, in a Divine personal Form, answering to the body in man, called in Scripture the Son ; and the operation and Proceeding Influences of the Divine Essence and the Divine Form in union, answering to the operative faculty in man, called in Scripture the Holy Spirit. You must allow me, here, therefore, to *adhere to my text* ;—I mean, to accept, as plain and clear declarations of the truth as to the Unity and Person of the Godhead, such passages of Scripture as I have before cited to that purpose ;—those, I

mean of the Old Testament, in which the Divine Speaker says, "I am Jehovah, and beside me there is no Saviour:" "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else:" and the declarations of Jesus Christ in the New: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father: how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the last; Who is, Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty." You must, I say, grant me to accept these testimonies in their obvious and literal meaning; and also, that Jesus Christ plainly showed that by this Holy Spirit is meant the Divine Virtue proceeding from Himself, when "*he breathed on his disciples and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit.*" With these truths on the minds of us all, we will proceed to the consideration of the very important doctrine of the Atonement.

I propose then to show, respecting *the Atonement*, in this and another Lecture, *what is its real nature, and how it is in harmony with the Divine Attributes of perfect Unity and Immutable Love; and with the concentration of the whole Trinity in the person of Jesus Christ.*

For it is with this doctrine as it is with most of the others which we have been considering in this course of Lectures; that in our views respecting it we in a manner come between those who maintain the doctrine in its usual acceptation, and those who deny it, or totally do away with its reality. That an Atonement was wrought for man by the Lord Jesus Christ, we most undoubtingly believe. The objections of Deists, and also of Unitarians, against the doctrine of an Atonement, are, we contend, utterly unfounded: such a doctrine is most unquestionably advanced in Scripture; and it is also, as there set forth, perfectly agreeable to reason. But as commonly explained, we must aver, and I entreat all who are present not to be offended at the averment, it is not contained in Scripture, and it is utterly inconsistent with Reason. I repeat, that I have no wish to hurt the feelings of even the weakest Christian. I am quite certain that multitudes who consider their salvation to depend upon the Atonement as commonly understood, are persons of most sincere



and ingenuous minds, and are actually in the way of salvation. We are convinced, as much as they can be, that had not the Lord Jesus Christ effected an atonement for us, we must all have perished in death eternal. While then we most cordially believe the *thing*, you will bear with me if I differ a little from the customary *mode of conceiving respecting it*. And if the doctrine, as commonly understood, does actually present a great bar, with many rational and well-disposed persons, to the acceptance of the Christian Religion; if not a few become Deists, not from any antecedent disinclination to Revelation in general, as, no doubt, is the case with too many, but from inability to reconcile such doctrines as those of the Trinity, as commonly insisted on, and of the Atonement, as generally explained, to the perceptions of Reason respecting the Divine Nature and Attributes,—to the first of all religious truths, the absolute Unity of the Godhead and his Infinite Goodness;—surely (as I have before said with respect to kindred doctrines) every well-wisher to the cause of true Religion must look with favour, or at least must listen with candour, to a view of the subject, which maintains inviolate the doctrine itself, as actually contained in the Scriptures, and at the same time removes the objections which are made against it, and against the Scriptures on account of it, by so large a class of the thinking portion of Society.

Like the doctrine of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, of Salvation by his blood, and of his Mediation and Intercession, all of which, in fact, form part of the doctrine of Atonement, and have each been considered in distinct Lectures, the common doctrine of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is objected to by Deists and Unitarians as involving the notion of more Divine Persons or Gods than One; as supposing the Divine Person who receives the atonement to be completely separate from Him who makes it,—so separate, indeed, as to be of an actually opposite nature; and as being in utter contrariety to the belief, that the first Attribute of Deity is Infinite Love and Goodness. Now, really, it must be admitted, that all this is included in the customary explanations of the doctrine of the Atonement. The atonement is believed to consist in a certain satisfaction for the sins of men made to the offended justice of God the Father;

which satisfaction consisted in the sufferings submitted to by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, whereby the wrath of the Father was appeased, and favor was obtained for sinful men. Now do look, my friends, as men possessing the faculty of rationality, —as endowed with a rational as well as an immortal soul,—at this doctrine for a few minutes. Can the God who makes the satisfaction be the same God as he who receives it? Can he even be a God of the same nature? If Divine justice is so inexorable a principle, that it could not remit the punishment due to sin upon the repentance and amendment of the sinner without exacting the full penalty incurred by it, how comes it that the Son, if he is God also, and thus of the same Divine Nature as the Father, did not feel his justice demand the same satisfaction? How comes it that the justice of the Holy Ghost was not equally offended, and did not equally require the sufferings of a Divine Person to appease his vengeance? Evidently, if these are three Divine Persons, the natures of the second and third are quite different from, and that of the second quite opposite to, that of the first: if each is God, then, they must be separate Gods of different and contradictory natures: and the least truly Godlike nature of all, as consisting in a justice which cannot forgive, and in a thirst for vindictive satisfaction which burns insatiably till appeased by suffering, is that which is ascribed to the first of the Divine Persons, the Father.

Such are the objections which Deists and Unitarians make to the doctrine of the Atonement, as commonly explained, and as represented to consist in giving satisfaction to the Divine justice and its vindictive requirements: and really, it is impossible to deny, that the doctrine, so presented, does include all the inconsistencies thus stated. We will therefore devote this Lecture, chiefly, to a consideration of the nature of the Divine Justice, as it truly is, and as it is commonly represented, both popularly, by preachers, and formally in Standards of doctrine.

Let me observe, in the first place, that there cannot be a greater error than to impute to God such a species of justice, as cannot be satisfied without the exaction of the full penalty due to transgression: or to suppose that all his justice can permit,

is, that the sinner should suffer by proxy instead of being punished in person.

According to this representation of *divine* justice, it must be a very different thing indeed from the virtue that passes under that name among men. Justice among men is understood to consist in the faithful performance of the duties which *we* owe to others,—not in the rigid exaction of what they owe to us. Never was a readiness to forgive either debts or injuries considered as a flaw in the character of a good man, or as affording any ground for reproaching him as unjust. This view of human excellence, so universally entertained among men, is founded on the precepts of the holy Word, and is continually urged as the rule of human duty by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. What can be more decisive than the parable of the debtors? The kingdom of heaven, the Lord declares, is like unto a certain king who would take account of his servants; and who, when one of his servants, who owed him the immense sum of ten thousand talents, had nothing to pay, and besought his patience, freely forgave him all. The same servant, however, when his patience was in turn intreated by a fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence, would not recede from his demand, and threw his debtor into prison till he should pay him. Now if what is called *divine* justice be, as one would expect, the prototype of *human* justice, this merciless creditor deserved commendation. He practised a justice of exactly the same character; for which, however, he was reprimanded and punished. How then can teachers of divinity ascribe as a perfection to the Lord a principle of action, which Divine Truth itself, and the common perceptions of all mankind, concur to reprobate as criminal in man?

But although divine justice, we are told by theologians, cannot allow the offender to escape without exacting full satisfaction, it matters not, to it, whether such satisfaction be made by the transgressor himself or by another in his place: and here again it is at variance with all human notions of justice. When a malefactor is condemned to the gibbet, what sort of laws would those be deemed, which would sanction the execution of an innocent person, even with his own consent, in lieu of the

wicked criminal? I remember, when a celebrated offender against the laws of this country was sentenced to death for extensive forgeries, while forgery was a capital offence, that a person who was tired of life made application to be accepted as his substitute; but though he urged in support of his plea the supposed property of the divine justice which we are now considering, the magistrate refused to promote the object of his application. It is true that, in this country, where such matters are regulated by fixed laws, the magistrate had no option: but I doubt whether the most absolute sovereign on earth, if at the same time a rational man, would feel himself authorized, in deciding on such a case, to take what is alleged to be the plan of *divine* justice as his model.

In short, the notions which theologians have invented on the subject of divine justice, and the mode of its combination with mercy, are so extraordinary, as to have been greatly instrumental in promoting the extension of infidelity. When Divine Truth itself in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ was condemned to crucifixion by a heathen governor, the victim declared to the oppressor, "He that hath delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." If it may be said without offence, the case is similar now. Divine Truth is not spiritually crucified—that is, rejected—by the Deist, till it is delivered into his hands by the Scribes and Pharisees of the present times,—till its professed expounders have so vehemently accused it,—so misrepresented its true character,—that, mistaking their distortions of it for the thing itself, the rational mind is ready to reject the whole. Thus men have ascribed to the Divine Being, under the name of justice, a quality which, when practised by men, is invariably stigmatized as cruelty: and their scheme for reconciling this with mercy and goodness has been, to transfer its exercise, without abating one jot of its rigour, from the guilty to the innocent.

The fact however is, and must be, that justice in the Lord, like love, mercy, faithfulness, and all his other moral attributes, differs not from the same quality in man, but by its infinitely greater purity. Justice, in man, consists, as observed already, not in enforcing to the utmost every demand which we may

have against others, but in answering faithfully every demand which they may have upon us. So, justice, in the Lord, consists, not in being "extreme to mark what is done amiss," and to levy punishment for it, but in a readiness to do every thing which Infinite Goodness can do for the benefit of his creatures, and to supply man with the means of salvation. "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, saith the Lord:—why will ye die, O house of Israel,"—is the testimony of the Old Testament on this subject [Ezek. xxxiii. 11]: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings! but ye would not,"—is the testimony of the New [Mat. xxiii. 37]. It might indeed be easily shown, that the term "justice," when mentioned in Scripture, does not carry with it the idea of punishing for guilt. The original terms in the Old and New Testaments are equivalent to the English word "righteousness," by which they are most commonly translated in the English Bible: and they never convey any idea at variance with that of beneficence and goodness. The Apostle John took his idea of the terms "just" and "justice" from an enlightened understanding of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and transferred it into the New, when he wrote, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" [1 John, i. 9]. So then, according to the idea of this beloved disciple, divine justice consists, not in punishing men for their sins, but in forgiving them on repentance. How awful then is the perversion, when less enlightened teachers, in treating of the justice of God, represent it as implying inexorable vengeance!

These few remarks on the nature of the divine justice (which might easily be carried much further), may in some degree tend to correct the mistakes too generally made on the subject, and to show how weak the common system of the Atonement is in the point which is usually regarded as its strongest bulwark. The necessity of satisfying the divine justice, is the plea constantly held forth, as requiring the artificial scheme of Atonement which is so universally substituted for the plain and beautiful system of the gospel. When, however, divine justice is seen to be, what it really is, only one of the aspects of the divine

goodness and love, it is perceived at once how little help can thence be drawn for the support of such erroneous notions. Man, doubtless, at the time of the Lord's coming into the world, and almost from his first creation, had fallen into a state which rendered atonement necessary. Atonement, accordingly, was mercifully accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ, who assumed human nature expressly for that purpose ; but the sufferings He therein underwent were not penal inflictions endured to appease vindictive justice.

I am not unaware, that while, in the common mode of presenting the doctrine of the Atonement, such views of the divine justice as I have now delineated constitute an indispensable ingredient, great solicitude is shown to reconcile them with the undeniable Scripture testimony to the Infinite Love, the Inexhaustible Mercy, of the Divine Father of the human race. This is usually done, by representing the justice and the mercy of God as antagonist-attributes, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ as a scheme for harmonizing them together, and allowing the operation of both. In proof of this, and at the same time to satisfy those who may not be much conversant with the subject, that I have been guilty of no exaggeration in depicting as I have done the customary views of theologians on the nature of divine justice, I will offer a statement or two on the subject from works of the highest authority in the religious world.

The authentic doctrine of the Church of England on this subject is delivered in her Book of Homilies, referred to in the thirty-fifth of her "Thirty-nine Articles of Religion." In that work, in the first "Sermon of the Salvation of Mankind, by only Christ our Saviour, from Sin and Death everlasting," are these statements:—"It is our parts and duties ever to remember the great mercy of God, how that (all the world being wrapped in sin by the breaking of the law) God sent his only Son our Saviour Christ into the world, to fulfil the law for us, and by shedding of his most precious blood, to make a sacrifice and satisfaction, or (as it may be called) amends to his Father for our sins, to assuage his wrath and indignation conceived against us for the same,"—"And although this justification be free unto us, yet it cometh not so freely to us, that there is no ransom paid there-

fore at all. But here may man's reason be astonished, reasoning after this fashion : If a ransom be paid for our redemption, then is it not given us freely. For a prisoner that paid his ransom, is not let go freely ; for if he goeth freely, then he goeth without ransom : for what is it else to go freely, than to be set at liberty without paying of ransom ? This reason is satisfied by the great wisdom of God in this mystery of our redemption ; who hath so tempered his justice and mercy together, that he would neither by his justice condemn us unto the everlasting captivity of the devil, and his prison of hell, remediless for ever without mercy, nor by his mercy deliver us clearly, without justice or payment of a just ransom : but with his endless mercy he joined his most upright and equal justice. His great mercy he showed unto us in delivering us from our former captivity, without requiring of any ransom to be paid, or amends to be made, upon our parts ; which thing had been impossible to be done. And whereas it lay not in us to do that, he provided a ransom for us, that was the most precious body and blood of his own most dear and best beloved Son Jesus Christ, who, besides this ransom, fulfilled the law for us perfectly. And so the justice of God and his mercy did embrace together, and fulfilled the mystery of our redemption."—"The Apostle toucheth specially three things, which must go together in our justification. Upon God's part, his great mercy and grace : upon Christ's part, justice, that is, the satisfaction of God's justice, or the price of our redemption, by the offering of his body, and shedding of his blood, with fulfilling of the law perfectly and thoroughly ; and upon our part, true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, which yet is not ours, but by God's working in us. So that in our justification, there is not only God's mercy and grace, but also his justice, which the Apostle calleth the justice of God, and it consisteth in paying our ransom, and fulfilling of the law : and so the grace of God doth not shut out the justice of God, in our justification, but only shutteth out the justice of man, that is to say, the justice of our works, as to be merits of deserving our justification."—"Our justification doth come freely by the mere mercy of God, and of so great and free mercy, that whereas all the world was not able of themselves to pay any part towards their ransom, it

- pleased their heavenly Father of his infinite mercy, without any our desert or deserving, to prepare for us the most precious jewels of Christ's body and blood, whereby our ransom might be fully paid, the law fulfilled, and his justice fully satisfied."

Here, we see, just as I have myself stated the doctrine, the justice of God is represented to be such, that, notwithstanding all that is said of the greatness of his mercy, he cannot possibly pardon a sinner, however penitent and reformed, till the full amount of punishment has been undergone (not by the sinner himself, because, for him, the punishment would be eternal, so that there could be no restoration of him to favour afterwards, but) by "his own most dear and best beloved Son." Surely, the idea thus presented of the Father's mercy, is not much more like genuine divine mercy, than is that of his justice like genuine divine justice, for where is the mercy of remitting the punishment of a guilty party to inflict it in full tale upon an innocent one, even though suffered willingly by the victim? If the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemane and on the cross, and during the whole of his state of humiliation, were really, as is unanimously affirmed by all who hold the public doctrine, equivalent to the sufferings which would have been undergone by all who are saved had they been left to eternal condemnation, then it is evident that no mercy whatever was exercised on the occasion, except by Him who voluntarily became the substitute. If He made full "amends to his Father for our sins, to assuage his wrath and indignation conceived against us for the same," it is obvious that no mercy was shown by the latter at all. The authors of the Homily candidly confess, that "man's reason may be astonished," and conclude, that "if a ransom be paid for our redemption, then it is not given us freely." Doubtless, "man's reason" will, and must say this. And how is "this reason satisfied?" Only by asserting—not proving—"the great wisdom of God in this mystery of our redemption." Which wisdom is represented as consisting in finding out a way to let the criminals go free, by laying their punishment upon the infinitely more than innocent Son of God. And thus, we are told, "with his endless mercy he joined his most upright and equal justice." Now, my Christian friends, be not offended if I ask, *Is your*



"reason satisfied" with such a joining of justice and mercy as this? Can it truly be said, that *this* is "most upright and equal justice?" How can such epithets be applied to such justice, unless it be done to seem to supply by words what is wanting in fact, and under the names of uprightness and equality to cover the reverse of both?

The absence of all truly divine character from such a justice as will not permit the Being who is governed by it to pardon any offence, how truly soever repented of and forsaken, without the infliction of the whole punishment denounced against it when *not* repented of and forsaken, has been sufficiently evinced in our preceding remarks on that subject; together with the utter failure of the attempts to reconcile it with true divine justice, by transferring its exercise from the real delinquents to a Divine Substitute, who generously, and with true divine love and mercy, consents to bear the penalty in their stead. And we have now seen, that such an exercise of justice, though represented as resulting from, and as displaying in the most affecting manner, the mercy of the God whose infinite wisdom is said to have devised it, in reality involves no mercy at all, except in him who submits to it; since the mercy experienced by the ransomed sinners is exactly equipoised, in the Being who only consents to show it to them on such a condition, by the severity exercised on the substituted Victim, on whose head all the thunderbolts of divine wrath, as the penalties of offended justice, are launched in their stead.

But letting this pass, for the present: admitting, for argument's sake, all that we have recited from the Church of England Homily on such a mode of "joining mercy with justice" to be as satisfactory to "man's astonished reason" as it is the contrary, and, consequently, that the common doctrine of the Atonement may be viewed, by those who hold it, as being in harmony with the divine attribute of Immutable Love: still the difficulty remains, How is it reconcilable with the divine attribute of Absolute Unity? It is obvious that, in the whole of the extract which I have recited, it is impossible to regard the God who demands satisfaction, and the God who makes satisfaction, as being the same; and it is very difficult to conceive how they

that framed it, and all who either compose or accept similar statements, can think so. "God" it is said, "sent his only Son our Saviour Christ into the world, to fulfil the law for us, and, by shedding his most precious blood, to make a sacrifice and satisfaction, or (as it may be called) amends to his Father for our sins, to assuage his wrath and indignation conceived against us for the same." How are these statements to be reconciled with the idea of an absolute unity, either of Person or of Essence, between the Sender and the Sent,—the Giver of sacrifice and satisfaction, and the receiver of the same,—the Assuager of wrath and indignation, and the Being whose wrath and indignation are assuaged? As remarked on a former occasion, unity of Person is not affirmed, but denied, by the maintainers of this doctrine: but Unity of Essence is not denied but strenuously affirmed: and yet, how can the Essence, the Nature, the Inmost Principle of Being, of Him who demands satisfaction of his justice, appeasement of his wrath, amends to his dignity as a law-giver insulted by our sins, be the same as that of Him, whose justice insists on no such satisfaction, who has no wrath that requires to be assuaged, and who desires no other amends for the insults offered to his dignity by our sins, than that we should accept from Him the grace which will prevent our persevering in them? Most palpable is the truth, that if the Father and the Son are beings of the same Essence, then, if the Father is governed by a justice that demands satisfaction, feels a wrath that requires assuagement, and maintains a dignity that must have amends made to it when insulted by our sins, the same justice, wrath, and demand for amends, must equally reign in the Son; and how he can lay his nature, in these respects, aside, to give to the Father, in the shape of horrible sufferings, that satisfaction, assuagement, and amends, which must equally be required by the same nature in himself, is so inconceivable, that there appears no danger of incurring the guilt of rash judgment if we venture to pronounce it impossible. And if so, that doctrine of Atonement which presents it in such a form as this, cannot be the true one. It is inconsistent with the divine attributes both of Absolute Unity and of Immutable Love, and requires two or more Divine Persons, or rather Beings, of

different and contradictory natures, to support it. Any doctrine so circumstanced is equally opposed to Reason and to Scripture, and cannot possibly be true.

But I have allowed myself to be carried much farther than I intended by the quotation I have made from the Church of England statement of its doctrine of divine justice and its combination with divine mercy. That quotation states the doctrine in its mildest and least extreme form; and yet in a way, so plainly betraying its inconsistencies, that it is difficult to contemplate it for a moment without feeling those inconsistencies crowding on the thoughts, and, in a manner, demanding exposure. I intended to have recited another passage or two, from other of the Church of England Homilies, in which the doctrine of that church on the subject of divine justice and divine wrath, and the satisfying of their demands by the birth into the world, the sufferings and death, of the Son of God, is more strongly presented. But I will pass to an authentic statement or two of the doctrines of other Protestant Churches, which agree in their views with the Church of England, but are disposed to express them more pointedly. All regard the justice and the mercy of the Lord as antagonist-attributes, and represent the Atonement as a scheme for harmonizing them together: and all support the statements which I have made respecting the nature of Divine Justice, as understood by orthodox theologians. And though I specifically recite the sentiments of Protestant Churches, it is to be understood that, on this subject, they have not receded from, but agree with, the views of the Roman Catholics.

The chief standards of doctrine in the Church of Scotland, and of most of the (so called) orthodox Dissenters of England, are the documents known as the Assembly's Confession of Faith, and Catechisms. These always connect the doctrine of the Atonement with that of Election and Predestination, and thus make it more repugnant than is commonly done in the Church of England statements on the subject, to the feelings of those kind-hearted Christians who believe that God is the common Father of all his human children, and regards them all with the equal feelings of Divine parental love. In the "Confession of Faith" [Ch. viii. § 5], the doctrine of Divine Justice, and the

satisfaction made to it by the Lord Jesus Christ, is thus stated:—“The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given him.” To the Confession and Catechisms is appended a tract briefly stating the doctrine of those formularies, under the title of “The Sum of Saving Knowledge.” Herein [Head ii.] the doctrine of the satisfying of Divine Justice by Jesus Christ is stated thus:—“God, for the glory of his rich grace, hath revealed in his word a way to save sinners, viz., by faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, by virtue of, and according to the tenor of, the covenant of redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the council of the Trinity, before the world began. The sum of the covenant of redemption is this: God having freely chosen unto life a certain number of lost mankind, for the glory of his rich grace, did give them, before the world began, unto God the Son, appointed Redeemer, that, upon condition he would humble himself so far as to assume the human nature, of a soul and a body, unto personal union with his divine nature, and submit himself to the law as surety for them, and satisfy justice for them, by giving obedience in their name, even unto the suffering of the cursed death of the cross, he should ransom and redeem them all from sin and death, and purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life, with all saving graces leading thereunto, to be effectually, by means of his own appointment, applied in due time to every one of them. This condition the Son of God (who is Jesus Christ our Lord) did accept before the world began, and in fullness of time came into the world, was born of the Virgin Mary, subjected himself to the law, and completely paid the ransom on the cross: but by virtue of the aforesaid bargain, made before the world began, he is in all ages, since the fall of Adam, still upon the work of applying actually the purchased benefits unto the elect: and that he doth by way of entertaining a covenant of free grace and reconciliation with them, through faith in himself;

by which covenant he makes over, to every believer, a right and interest to himself and to all his blessings."

Now, my candid brethren ! if I had given this statement of the prevailing doctrines on the subject of the Redemption and Atonement of Jesus Christ as my own representation of them, would not some of you have thought I was dealing in caricature ? Would not most of you—all who had not heard of such a statement before,—have concluded that no body of professing Christians, much less whole national Churches, could have framed so gross a picture of the Divine Economy in regard to man's redemption and the means of his salvation ? Yet this is a standard of doctrine in the national Church of Scotland, and of nearly all, the Seceders from that Church, who differ from the Establishment only on matters of discipline, not on points of faith. And the views of most of the Dissenters in this country are generally the same, as presented in their standards of doctrine. There are, indeed, some matters in the quotation now read, which I have not treated of, nor purpose to do so, in this series of Lectures ; such as the "*bargain*," before the world began, between the Father and the Son, and the limitation of its benefits to "*a certain number of lost mankind :*" but does the doctrine of the satisfaction of the Father's justice by the sufferings of the Son, his "*ransom*" of the elect from sin and death, and "*purchase*" for them of righteousness and eternal life, derive any additional recommendation from being found in such company ? Does there appear, in this mode of stating the doctrine, anything of genuine divine mercy, in the mercy thus described of the Father, —anything of true Divine Justice, in the justice whose demands were thus satisfied ? Is there, in short, anything which tends to discredit the view which I first gave of the nature of Divine Justice as commonly delineated, and of its incompatibility with the true Divine Justice of the Scriptures, and of the Lord Himself ?

In the "Larger Catechism," these reasons are given, in answer to the question, "Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God ?" "It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death ;

give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience and intercession; and to satisfy God's justice, procure his favor, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation." As to the combination of this "*infinite wrath*," and of "*God's justice*," with mercy, I find nothing more explicit than this: "Although Christ by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in behalf of them that are justified; yet, inasmuch as God accepteth the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them, and did provide this surety, his only Son, imputing his righteousness to them and requiring nothing of them for their justification but faith, which also is his gift, their justification is to them of free grace." Free grace, I suppose means much the same as pure mercy. Upon every theory, doubtless, the salvation of sinners must be, in some way, of the pure mercy of God, who alone has provided the means of its attainment: but upon the "scheme," here presented, the explainers do well to limit the *free grace* or pure mercy to those who benefit by it. "Their justification," they say, "is *to them* of free grace." They say this, because they well know that, upon their system, it is not of free grace, or of pure mercy, at all, in Him who confers it; for of Him, as they seem to take pleasure in saying, it is "purchased"—the full equivalent is paid for it in the sufferings endured by the Son "under the infinite wrath of God." There is, as some of them state in so many words, the "*quid pro quo*." In the words of Calvin himself (from whom all the views above stated are taken), as they are found in his celebrated *Institutes of the Christian Religion*: "This is our absolution; that the guilt, which held us subject to punishment, is transferred to the head of the Son of God; and this compensation is especially to be held fast, lest we go trembling and anxious through our whole life, as if the just revenge of God were impending over us, which the Son of God has transferred to himself." [B. ii. ch. xvi. § 5.] Here, we see, all depends upon the "*compensation*." Our *guilt*, and "*the just revenge of God for it*," are "*transferred* to the head of the Son of God." Here, certainly is free grace or mercy *as regards us*, and infinitely so as regards Him who undertakes the

*transfer*, and makes the *compensation* ; but in Him who requires them, and whose justice will not allow him to lay aside his "revenge" until he has effected the *transfer* and received the *compensation*, it were an abuse of words to say, that there is any *free* grace or *pure* mercy at all. The harmonizing, in him, of the attributes of justice and mercy, on the scheme supposed, fairly inspected, is as manifestly fictitious, as is the scheme itself elaborately artificial.

It was not, when I began, my intention to devote so much of this Lecture to an investigation of the notions usually advanced in systems of theology on the attribute of Divine Justice, and the mode of its combination, in the popular doctrine of the Atonement, with the attribute of Divine Mercy. I must now reserve the consideration of the Atonement itself, as to its real nature, for another Lecture. We have now, I trust it will be admitted, seen with considerable clearness, that the customary doctrine upon it is *not* in harmony with the Divine Attributes of perfect Unity and Immutable Love ; consequently, that it cannot be the true doctrine. The true doctrine, we shall see as we proceed, is (as, to be true, it must be) perfectly in harmony with those principal Divine Attributes ; and equally so, with the Concentration of the whole Trinity in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I felt, brethren, as I proceeded (and I trust that, herein, your candor will coincide with me, or at least will excuse me), that the statements of the views of the Divine Justice, and of the Atonement as growing out of them, presented in the extracts, which I have read from the authentic documents which deliver the doctrines of the Church of England and of the Church of Scotland, and in which almost all Protestant Churches throughout the world concur,—as does the Roman Catholic Church also,—might not be without use, as evincing by their own light,—or rather by their inherent darkness,—how great a necessity exists that more genuine views of Divine Justice, and consequently of the Atonement, should be promulgated and received among mankind. The doctrine of Vindictive Justice, as a ruling Divine Attribute, lies, we see, at the root of all the errors which are contained in the doctrine of the Atonement as commonly understood ; whereas, in reality, *vindictive*

justice, including wrath and revenge, is not a Divine Attribute at all; as was shown in our third Lecture. Divine Justice is, most unquestionably, diametrically opposed to all sin and iniquity, and consequently, to all who cherish and persevere in sin and iniquity. Consequently, such as do so cannot but reap the fruits in everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord. But what Divine Justice is opposed to, is sin and iniquity themselves, and not the sinners, any further than as they are identified with their sin. When, therefore, the sinner turns from his sin, Divine Justice is satisfied, in the only way in which he desires satisfaction: because the object or end of Divine Justice is not punishment and vengeance, but reformation and salvation. "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Vindictive Justice, as it is called,—that is, the principle which demands the infliction of so much punishment for so much crime—or rather, of infinite punishment for all crimes, even the smallest, and the same whether they are repented of and forsaken or not, is no part of Essential Justice, and cannot but be most abhorrent to the Divine Nature. And the Atonement of Jesus Christ consists, as, we shall see in our next Lecture, not in undergoing punishment in man's stead,—nor was this the design of his submitting to such direful temptations and sufferings; but in uniting Human Nature in Himself with his Essential Divinity, and so providing the means of reconciliation and restoration for mankind. By availing ourselves of those means,—of the power thus imparted to perform true repentance and to become regenerate,—Divine Justice, such as it truly is, will be satisfied in regard to us; our past offences will be blotted out without any punishment for them being exacted; and we shall reap the fulness of the blessing in life everlasting.



## LECTURE XXII.

THE ATONEMENT CONSIDERED AFFIRMATIVELY: WHAT IS ITS REAL NATURE; AND HOW IT IS IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES OF ABSOLUTE UNITY AND IMMUTABLE LOVE, AND WITH THE CONCENTRATION OF THE WHOLE TRINITY IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

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EXOD. xxxii. 30.

*“And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord: peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.”*

In our last Lecture, we entered on the consideration of the great doctrine of the *Atonement*, with the design of showing *what is its real nature, and how it is in harmony with the Divine Attributes of Absolute Unity and Immutable Love; and with the concentration of the whole Trinity in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.* But we did not then go far, in the affirmative consideration of the doctrine, beyond a brief statement of its true nature. The errors with which it has been commonly associated are of such magnitude, arising out of the mistaken conceptions which have prevailed on the nature of Divine Justice, that we were insensibly led to dwell upon that subject, so necessary to be apprehended with some degree of enlightened intelligence, till it engrossed almost all the whole Lecture. But I trust our labour was not thrown away. What was adduced from the received standards of doctrine on the nature of Divine Justice and the mode of its combination with Divine Mercy, could not but be seen to evince, that the doctrine of the Atonement, as generally understood, is not in harmony with the primary Divine Attri-

butes of Infinite Love and Indivisible Unity ; and, consequently, that a view of the doctrine which truly is in harmony with those most essential Divine Attributes, is indispensably required, and can alone be the true one.

Such a one I am to proceed to offer. Indeed, the true doctrine results of itself, when the mistaken notions respecting the Divine Justice are cleared out of the way, and the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Salvation by his blood, with his Mediation, Intercession, and Advocateship, as explained in our Lectures on those subjects, are justly understood. It will then be easy to comprehend what is the real nature of the atonement which the Lord Jesus Christ effected on behalf of mankind, provided we are previously aware of what is the exact grammatical meaning of the word "atonement : " for, as is the case in many other of the subjects respecting which vulgar errors prevail, a great deal of the misapprehension which exists on this subject, in this country, is connected with the change of meaning which has gradually taken place in the word itself. This change has been such, that its original signification has grown entirely obsolete ; so that, whenever the term is used by modern speakers and writers, they give it a sense which it did not bear, when it was introduced, between two and three hundred years ago, into the present version of the Holy Scriptures.

We proceed then to consider the real nature of the Atonement : in doing which, we will, in the first place, *explain the true import of the word* : in the second place, we will *state the true doctrine, and confirm it by examining the manner in which Atonement is spoken of in the Scriptures of truth* : and finally, I will offer some remarks with the intention of showing, *that they who have been accustomed to the common mode of explaining the Atonement, need not fear to accept our view of its nature ; since we admit all that is usually said respecting it to be consistent with the truth, provided we understand the terms employed in the sense which they always bear as used in the Holy Word.*

As I stated in the introductory remarks in our last Lecture, I am fully aware that, on this subject we tread upon very tender ground. And, evident as, to us, is the error that pervades the theological notions respecting Divine Justice, and the mode of

its combination with Divine Mercy, in the Atonement as commonly understood, as demonstrated in our last, I am far from expecting that every hearer will be prepared to relinquish them at once. Not a few would much rather give up the Absolute Unity of God, than part with the received notions of the Atonement. Methinks I hear some still saying, "Is not the Atonement the expiatory sacrifice which Jesus offered in his own person to the Father, which appeased his wrath, made satisfaction for the sins of mankind, and again obtained for them the favour of their offended God? And what becomes of all this, if you take the angry, vindictive God from us, and leave us none but the Lord Jesus Christ, whose merciful nature never required pacifying, and whose grace is altogether free, spontaneous, and unbought? God, we know, is said in his Word to be One; but nevertheless, if you make this One to include both the Atoner and the Atoned, do you not destroy the doctrine of the Atonement altogether?" Softly! I would answer, my mistaken friends! We do not destroy the doctrine of the Atonement, but restore it to its genuine lustre. What we destroy are only the vain traditions and perversions of men. We take away, if you please, your angry, vindictive God, because no such God ever did, or can exist, since anger and revenge are affections that cannot possibly have any place in the Divine Essence, being of an essence or nature diametrically opposite. We take away also your *bought* favour, your *purchased* grace, because we cannot conceive how favour that is *purchased* can be favour,—how grace that is *paid for* can be grace. But we offer you, instead, what the Scriptures offer, a God of love,—that Jehovah of whom the prophet declares, "in his love and in his pity he redeemed them" [Isa. lxiii. 9]; we offer you favour from a God who requires no tortures to wring it from Him,—a grace which, as the very word implies, is unpurchased,—free. It is plain that you feel, yourselves, from the assumed difference of their attributes and offices, that, as the Atonement is usually represented, the Atoner cannot be the same God as the Atoned. Yet can you not be satisfied with one shepherd to the heavenly fold? Suppose yourselves, for a moment, literally to be sheep: would you say, "We are not satisfied with this shepherd: we want a more

exalted governor: we have heard that this shepherd is the subject of a personage whom they call the king: let us go and seek this king in person, taking care, however, to mention the name of our shepherd as a form of introduction?" Alas! the silly sheep who should take a journey for this purpose, if they did not literally fall into the jaws of the wolf, would assuredly incur a catastrophe no less dreadful; and perhaps they who desert their spiritual Shepherd rush into a danger not less terrible. Sheep, it is evident, have nothing to do with kings at a distance. Their *shepherd* is *their* king, and the only superior to whom they should pay obedience. And the Shepherd of the Christian sheepfold is a King indeed. David was taken from the flocks to be made king over Israel on purpose that he might represent Him. If this is not allowed to be sufficient evidence, that Jesus "the Good Shepherd" is the true king of Israel,—even Jehovah Himself; the prophets will afford such as cannot be disputed. The Psalmist says, "*Jehovah* is my *shepherd*, I shall not want" [Ps. xxiii. 1]. Again: "Give ear, O *shepherd* of Israel! Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock, thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth!" [Ps. lxxx. 1]. Isaiah says, "Behold, the *Lord God* will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him: He shall feed his flock like a *shepherd*" [ch. xl. 10]. And Jeremiah exclaims, "Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off: He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a *shepherd* doth his flock: for *Jehovah* hath *redeemed* Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he" [ch. xxxi. 10, 11]. Here then Jehovah is declared to be both the Redeemer and the Shepherd of His church: Jesus is allowed to be the Redeemer; and declares Himself to be the *shepherd* of His church [John x. 11, 14],—declares too, to exclude all subterfuge, that there should be but *one* shepherd [ver. 16]: Can then any mathematical demonstration come out more fully, than that Jesus is one Divine Person with Jehovah:—that there is one only Divine Shepherd, and that Jesus is He? This we have abundantly established in former Lectures. Is it not then certain, that all notions of Atonement which require more Gods

than one for their support, as we have seen, and all persons *feel*, the common notion does, must be fundamentally erroneous? Listen, then, I entreat you, with patience and candour, while we endeavour to offer a view of it which is free from this difficulty.

I. In the first place we are to *inquire into the meaning of the word*.

It is a fact well known to all who study languages, that, in all living tongues, words are continually changing their meaning. A word is first introduced into a language to express some specific idea. But there is a remarkable tendency in the human mind (which would afford matter of curious speculation to the philosophical enquirer) to divert words from their primary sense to a secondary one. Poetry, in particular, delights in the use of metaphorical expressions; that is, in using terms which do not literally describe the thing to which they are applied, but which, seizing upon one of its leading qualities, describes the thing by the application of a term which *literally* applies to something else, but the name of which is given to the thing intended by the writer, on account of its resembling the other in some distinguishing circumstance. This is not the place to enter into the philosophy of this subject; otherwise I should say, that this tendency to use terms which excite other ideas beside the primary one for which they are used, arises from the same law of nature, as that by which we perceive more charms in a musical composition including an harmonious arrangement of different parts, than in a simple unassisted melody. Thus the describing of a thing by a term, that at the same time, excites an idea of something else, which resembles it either more nearly or remotely, affords the pleasure arising from the tacit comparison of two or more distinct things; and this is a pleasure closely analogous to that afforded in music, where one or more subordinate parts are heard together with the principal air. Thus, if we say of a *valiant soldier* that he is in battle a *lion*, the image, by the subordinate yet harmonizing idea which it presents in aid of the principal one, conveys the meaning much more forcibly to the mind, and at the same time impresses it in a far more pleasing manner, than if we were simply to say of him, He is a brave man. As the animal called a lion is known among us by no

other name, and is still existing, we incur no danger of confounding the meaning of the word when we thus apply it to the soldier. But suppose the animal so called to become extinct, as it is probable he will in a few centuries more; and supposing it should become so common to call a brave soldier a *lion* that he should seldom be called by any other name: the inevitable consequence would be, that the unlearned part of mankind, not knowing that there had ever been an *animal* called a lion, would infallibly consider this as the proper name of a valiant soldier. The same would be the consequence if lions were to continue to exist, but were to be called by degrees by some other name, losing that of lions altogether.

Now what we are supposing *might* be the case at some future day with the term "lion," is actually the case with a considerable number of words at present, as every philologist knows full well. To take one example out of several that might be offered. The word *passion* has changed its meaning twice since it was introduced into our language; and its two secondary meanings continue in use, whilst its primitive sense is almost entirely forgotten. There is now, I believe, but one phrase in the language, in which the word is retained in its primitive meaning; and here, I have no doubt, many simple minds often wonder what its meaning is. It is derived from the Latin word *pator*, which signifies *to suffer*: and thence, when first introduced into the English language, it simply meant *suffering*. Thus we still speak, in the instance in which alone it is still retained, of the Lord's *passion*, or of the *passion* of the cross, meaning the *suffering* which he then underwent. But we never use the word in this its proper meaning in any other instance. We never say of a rogue under the lash, that he deserves his *passion*, meaning, his *suffering*; or of a cargo of negroes, in their voyage in a slave ship from Africa to America, that their *passions* are extreme; if we were to use such a phrase, we should be understood to mean, that their *rage* and *indignation* are great at the treatment they experience, not that their *sufferings* are so. For a secondary sense has gradually been attached to the word, which has superseded the original one. As the emotions of the mind are in a great measure involuntary, so that a man seems to

suffer, rather than to cause them, the word *passions* has by degrees been transferred to mean these emotions: and all our affections whether good or bad, whether of love or of hatred, are denominated *passions*. At first, this use of the term was metaphorical. It was known that it properly signified *sufferings*: and, when applied to the mind, it was understood to be so used on account of the involuntary nature of most of the mental emotions. But, by degrees, the double idea attached to it in this application, has been lost sight of, and the sense that originally was secondary is becoming the principal; so that now, whenever we speak of a man's *passions*, we never mean his *sufferings* but the *emotions of his mind*. And, by degrees, another idea still has become attached to the word, which is secondary to this, as this formerly was to the primitive. As one of the strongest emotions of the carnal mind is anger, we have begun to regard *this* as being pre-eminently a passion: and thus, when we now use the word in the singular number, and say of a man that he is in a *passion*, we never mean, as would have been meant formerly, that he is in a fit of love, of despair, of joy, or of grief, but always that he is in a fit of *anger*. And this meaning of the term bids fair by degrees to swallow up the others; and thus, by two steps, the word is likely, not only to lose, as it has already done, its primitive sense of *suffering*, but every other sense except that of *anger*; which is a sense very remote indeed from any thing which those who first used it ever thought of.

Now considerable inconvenience attends this perpetual changing in the use and meaning of words, even in common things. Our oldest authors, as Gower and Chaucer, are, owing partly to it and partly to the disuse of many words altogether, already become unintelligible; and we need the frequent assistance of commentators to enable us to understand Spenser, and even Shakspeare. But the consequence becomes very serious indeed, when it involves the meaning of Scriptural language; and if we follow the current of time and change without noting its deviations, we shall, from age to age, alter our views of the doctrines of revelation, because a change has imperceptibly been introduced in the meaning of the words in which those doctrines are conveyed. Our present translation of the Bible was made in

the days of Shakspeare: and many very important terms used in it have since altered their signification, as much as many in his comparatively trivial though admirable writings. If it were convenient, it could easily be shown, that some of the errors which at this day prevail respecting the tripersonality of the Deity, man's duty to God and his fellow-creatures, and the personality of the Holy Spirit, have partly arisen out of the change that has taken place in the meaning of the words *person*, *charity*, and *ghost*: So, also, some of the chief mistakes which prevail respecting the nature of the benefits procured for us by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, derive their chief support, in this country, from an alteration that has been by degrees established in the meaning of the word *Atonement*.

When, at this day, Christians speak of the Atonement, they mean by it a satisfaction made by Jesus to the Father, whereby his wrath was appeased; whereas, at the time the present translation of the Bible was made, the word bore no such meaning. This is evident from the only passage in the New Testament where the expression occurs [Rom. v. 11], where the Apostle says, "But we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *atonement*." The same Greek word which is here translated *atonement*, is rendered, in every other place where it occurs, *reconciliation*, which is its proper meaning, and which, therefore, it is plain, the translators understood to be the meaning of the word *atonement*, when they rendered the original term by that word. It is the same Greek word (that is, the verb answering to this noun), which occurs in the passage where we read in Paul, "God was in Christ, *reconciling* the world unto Himself" [2 Cor. v. 18]. It would here then have been equally correct, to have said, agreeably to the meaning which the word *atone* bore at that time, "God was in Christ, *atoning* the world unto himself." But how would this agree with the sense now given to the word *atone*? Not at all: a plain proof that the word is now quite warped from its original meaning. Accordingly, the lexicographer Johnson informs us, that the *primitive* meaning of the word was, "*to agree, to accord;*" of which he gives a proof from Shakspeare, who wrote at the time when the present authorized translation of the Bible



was made, and who introduces one of his characters saying respecting another.

“He and Aufidius can no more *atone*  
Than violentest contrariety ;—

where *atone* evidently means *agree*. Johnson further states, that the word was originally written as two words joined by a hyphen, and pronounced as the two words, *at* and *one*, are pronounced when alone, so that the sound was not *atone*, but *at-one*, and, in the noun, *at-one-ment*. We still use the particle *at* in combination with other words in the same manner ; as *at home*, *at peace*, and the like. Of course, then, to be *at-one*, must mean, to be *in a state of oneness*, or *unity* ; that is, *in agreement* ; just as to be *at peace* is to be *in a state of peace*.

Of this form of the word we have several examples given by the translators of the Bible themselves. Thus, in the first apocryphal book of the Maccabees, it is said of some who were besieged in the tower at Jerusalem [ch. xiii. 50], “Then cried they to Simon, beseeching them to be *at one* with them.” Again, in the second book of the Maccabees [ch. i. 5], a wish is expressed respecting certain parties addressed, that God “would hear your prayers, and be *at one* with you.” And again, certain pious persons say, in the same book [ch. vii. 33], “Though the living Lord be angry with us a little while for our chastening and correction, yet shall he be *at one* again with his servants.” In the New Testament, also, in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, Stephen, in his harangue before the chief priest and council of the Jews, when relating some circumstances in the history of Moses, says, as the translators have properly rendered the original according to the idiom of the English language as then in use [ch. vii. 26], “The next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have *set them at one* again.”

It is, likewise, only in this form and sense that the word is found in the doctrinal standards of the Church of England. The following examples, from the Book of Homilies, are illustrative of the subject in more ways than one : “—How should we have in memory this excellent act and benefit of Christ’s death ! whereby he hath purchased for us the undoubted pardon

and forgiveness of our sins, whereby he made *at one* the Father of heaven with us,—” “Christ did put himself between God’s deserved wrath and our sin; and rent that obligation whereby we were in danger to God, and paid our debt. Our debt was a great deal too much for us to have paid: and without payment, God the Father could never be *at one* with us [*Hem. for Good Friday*].

As *Atonement* was originally written and pronounced *at one*, and meant *to agree*, or *being in a state of agreement*, so *atonement* was written and pronounced *at-one-ment*, and meant simply agreement, and nothing more.

II. We proceed then, in the second place, *to state the true Doctrine, and confirm it by examining the manner in which Atonement is spoken of in the Scriptures of truth.*

The true view of the doctrine of Atonement, that is, Agreement or Reconciliation, is this; That by the assumption of human nature by Jehovah in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the opposition or contrariety which previously existed between man and God was removed, first in his own assumed Humanity, and then, by the influences of his Spirit proceeding from his Humanity when fully glorified and united to the Essential Divinity, in those who should acknowledge him and accept his mercies. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ consisted, in the total sanctification and dedication of his human nature, till it was entirely assimilated to his Divine Nature, rendered itself Divine, and made the proper organ for the indwelling of the whole fulness of the Godhead, and for the exercise of all the energies of the Divine Omnipotence; just as man’s body is the proper organ for the indwelling of the soul, and for the exercise of all the powers belonging to the compound man. By our salvation, by the blood of Jesus Christ, is meant, (we have seen,) in a natural sense, by his death: without which we could not have been saved, because without it his Humanity could not have been glorified; it being absolutely necessary that the merely human life should be extinguished before the purely Divine life could descend and take its place. And the Mediation, Intercession, and Advocateship of Jesus Christ, include, (we have seen,) both the access which is afforded

for man to God by the Medium of the Glorified Humanity of Jesus Christ; and the communication from God to man, by the same blessed Medium, of all the gifts necessary to his salvation. Thus most true it is, that by the assumption and glorification of his Humanity, He made atonement for us,—that is, effected agreement between man and God, by clothing Himself with a Divine Manhood and uniting this with the Essential Godhead, and by enabling created man to desist from that which was the cause of his separation. The prophet says, “It is your iniquities which have separated between you and your God:”—the removal then of these iniquities, and the reception by man of heavenly graces from God to adorn his mind in their place, is the making of an atonement, an *at-one-ment* or *agreement*. This would ever have been impossible, had not the Lord presented the graces of his Spirit in a form, and with a power, capable of reaching man in the state of separation in which he stood; and this could only be, by the Holy Spirit, or divine influence, proceeding from his Divine or Glorified Human Person. Before, then, such a Holy Spirit could be given, or such a divine influence be imparted, it was necessary that the Humanity should be assumed by the Lord, and united to the Divinity. That the consequence of this, to those who look to the Lord in this his form of accommodation to their state, would be, the communication of every grace necessary to their reception of spiritual life, is declared by the Lord when, in a sublime passage quoted in a former Lecture, He “stood and cried” (as it is expressed, to denote the ardour of his Divine Love, and the earnestness of his desire for man’s salvation), “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink:”—to thirst, is ardently to desire the truths of salvation: to go to Jesus, is to apply to Jehovah in his Humanity as their only Source: and to drink, is to receive and appropriate them. The effect hereof, in enlightening the mind and imparting spiritual life, He expresses by going on to say, “He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;” which the evangelist explains by adding, “This spake he of the Spirit, which they who believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” If then his glorifica-

tion, which took place at his resurrection and ascension, and of which his death, as to the maternal humanity, was a necessary preliminary, was requisite for the impartation of the saving mercies here offered, how easy is it to see what was the nature of the Atonement thus accomplished!—namely, agreement or concord between God and man, effected by the removal of the enmity in man's heart, by the communication of that spiritual drink, which the Lord here declares is to be received from his Glorified Humanity,—that is, of those graces of the Spirit, that living water, which the evangelist affirms could not be given till his Humanity was glorified.

It will be useful here to examine the manner in which Atonement is spoken of in the Scriptures of truth.

In the Old Testament, the expression frequently occurs; and as it is in the Old Testament usually said, on the occasion of the sacrifices, that an atonement was made, the notion has thence been confirmed, that an atonement means the pardon of guilt, by the substitution of a victim to bear its penalty in lieu of the sinner himself. What has been offered on the nature of sacrifices, in our Lectures on the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and on the Levitical Sacrifices, will be amply sufficient to correct this misapprehension. If we understand sacrifices, when presented by man, to represent the offering to the Lord of the worship of a heart deeply acknowledging that all good is from Him, and dedicating to him the heavenly graces which are received from Him, we may easily apprehend what was the nature of the Atonement at which they pointed. Thus, as there can be no worship of the Lord from heavenly affections unless they have first been received from Him, and as such a reception implies that renewal of the heart and mind which is called regeneration, it is evident that, where this has taken place, there is *atonement*, that is *agreement*, or *reconciliation*, restored between the worshipper and the Object of his worship. That *atonement* does actually, in Scripture, mean *agreement*, and cannot be intended to express the vicarious suffering of punishment, is evident from a variety of passages in the Old Testament where atonement is said to be made without the intervention of any victim at all. Thus, after the Israelites had transgressed by worshipping the

golden calf, Moses said, in the passage which I have read as a text, "Ye have sinned a great sin : and now I will go up unto the Lord ; peradventure I shall *make an atonement* for your sin ;" meaning, that they might be reconciled to God by his prayers. No sacrifice was here offered, so that no idea of "substitution," of "amends," or of "compensation," can possibly be introduced : Moses, by prayer only, *made an atonement* for the people,—effected their *reconciliation*. So when a plague had broken out in the camp in consequence of the people's murmuring at the fate of Korah and his companions, "Moses said to Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation and *make an atonement* for them." There are many similar instances, in which it is evident that no idea of substituted punishment can be intended, but that whatever was efficient in causing agreement or reconciliation between man and God is termed an atonement. How truly then was atonement or agreement procured by the glorification of the Lord's Humanity ! since, as already explained, Humanity being thus first reconciled, and even perfectly united, with Divinity in his Person, the means of effecting agreement between man and God, in the only manner in which it can be real,—that is, by the renewal of man's heart, through a submission to the divine operations for the purpose,—were thence poured forth, with an abundance and power which nothing else could possibly have afforded.

But let us come to the New Testament, and see what this says upon the subject. Here, as I have already remarked, when quoting the text to show the meaning of the word "atonement," the word itself occurs but in one single instance ; which is in Rom. v. 11 : and some may feel a little surprised, judging from the manner in which the term is there used, how the conclusion can have been formed, that Jesus Christ made an atonement to the Father, or satisfied his justice and appeased his wrath, as the phrase is understood to mean ; when yet it is declared, in the only passage of the New Testament in which the word is found, that it is *we* who have received the atonement. The Apostle Paul says, "We joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also *we* have received the atonement." The reason why

this, when pointed out, may occasion some surprise, is, because few have attended to the proper meaning of the original Greek term, which, as we have seen, is *reconciliation*; and it was man who was reconciled, and who required to be reconciled, to God; not God who required to be reconciled to man. Just in the same way, the Apostle delivers this doctrine of Atonement or reconciliation in the most solemn and express manner, when he says, in the other passage which I have already quoted for the meaning of the original word, and which I also recited in the second Lecture on Mediation, but which is necessary to be borne in mind when considering the doctrine itself, "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation,"—that is, of *atonement*. What was this ministry? what were its ministers to teach? The Apostle informs us by immediately adding, "To wit: that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them" [2 Cor. v. 18, 19.] What can be more clear, more explicit, more lovely? Christ was not, as a separate Divine Person, reconciling or making atonement for the world to God, as another Divine Person; but God himself was in Christ, as the soul of man is in his body, reconciling the world—bringing it into a state of agreement or at-one-ment—with himself. And so far from exacting a rigorous satisfaction for his offended justice,—of which the Apostle says not a word,—He effected this reconciliation of his own free motion, "not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Behold, my friends, the genuine Apostolic doctrine of Atonement or Reconciliation! How widely different from that which men have substituted for it, and which commonly passes under the name of the Atonement! From the true doctrine we learn, that by taking our nature in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, God has opened a new means of access to Himself, and has put Himself into a covenant-relation with those who, by exercising faith in Him as thus manifested, come into a state receptive of his saving mercies. Thus are we placed in a state of agreement, reconciliation, or at-one-ment with Him. We no longer stand afar off in a state of alienation, but come into connexion with Him as His covenanted people: and the terms of

the covenant are, that, receiving power from Him to enable us to do so, as is now the privilege of all, if we are obedient to his will, renouncing whatever is offensive in His sight, and, in affection, thought, and practice, following those things which He approves and enjoins, we shall be gifted by Him with a new nature, being created anew in righteousness and true holiness, and shall be made partakers of eternal salvation.

But the Atonement or reconciliation of man with God, effected by the Lord's assumption and glorification of the Humanity, may be viewed in a sense more general, more comprehensive still. By this great work, Atonement was effected for the whole human race. The communication between God and man which had been broken off, and which, with the unclothed Divinity, had been rendered impossible, by the depth of man's fall and alienation, was restored by God's investing himself with Humanity, and thus, so to speak, taking to himself the means of reaching and communicating with man again. This is the true import of the declaration of the Apostle when he says, that even "when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" [Rom. v. 10]. To be reconciled to God "when we were enemies," can mean no other, than to be placed in a state capable of receiving his mercies, and in which he can dispense them to us, and hold communication with us, whether we savingly receive his gifts or not. This is said to be effected "by the death of his Son," not because this appeased divine vengeance, but because his death was indispensable to the complete putting off of the infirm humanity and putting on of the Divine Humanity, and thus to the perfect union of the Divinity and the Humanity in Himself; till which was accomplished, the separating chasm between God and created man could not, so to speak, be bridged over. But, as the Apostle argues, if this were done,—if we were thus reconciled,—"when we were enemies, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life;"—being put into a state in which we *may* receive the Lord's saving mercies, and this capability being imparted without any co-operation of ours, much more shall we, if we avail ourselves of the blessing, by exerting the capacity thus bestowed upon us, "be saved by His life,"—by admitting the life-giving streams, the salvation

imparting energies, which thenceforth ever flow from Him "who ever liveth to make intercession for us," in the way explained in our Lectures on that subject. The benefits which we shall experience, as consequent upon the individual atonement which we then shall realize, are those which I have just faintly described.

III. Thus then we see how real was the Atonement effected for us by the Lord Jesus Christ; and we see, also, how it is in perfect harmony with the divine attributes of Absolute Unity and Immutable Love, and with the concentration of the whole Trinity in his adorable Person. The Atonement, as commonly understood, requires, as we have seen, and as those who hold it as we have also seen, feel in their hearts, a belief in another God beside the Lord Jesus Christ. It is plain then that the common *idea* of it must be erroneous; and yet as we are in the last place to show, *they who have been accustomed to the usual mode of explaining this doctrine need not hesitate to embrace the view we have been offering* instead of it; *for we admit all that is usually said about it to be consistent with the truth, provided we understand the terms employed, (such as the Father, the Son, the wrath of God, and its appeasement,) in the same sense as they always bear when used in the Holy Word.*

Nothing can be more certain, as we demonstrated at some length in our third Lecture, than that the most essential property of the Divine Nature is Love. And if what I am about to say on that subject, should remind you of some things that I said then, I trust that the very different application which I shall make of them, and the immense importance of the subject which I propose thus to illustrate, will amply suffice to prevent what I shall offer from palling on the ear like a twice-told tale.

Nothing, then, I repeat, can be more certain, than that the most essential attribute of the Divine Author of our being is Love. "God is love," says the Apostle John [1 Ep. iv. 8, 16]; in which truly evangelical sentiment he only re-echoes the repeated testimonies of the inspired writers under the Law: "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works," is the declaration of the heaven-taught Psalmist [Psalm cxlv. 9]; and it is over and over again affirmed, that "the Lord



is gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" [Ex. xxxiv. 6, &c.]. The Lord Jesus Christ also declares, Himself, that He "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" [Matt. v. 45]; meaning, not merely that He blesses the products of the earth without regard to the state of the cultivator, but that He imparts the influences of His love, signified by the rising of the sun, and the communication of His truth, signified by sending His rain alike to all, bestowing on each whatever the necessities of his state require. Can He then possibly possess a spark of anger in His own nature? Can he burn with vengeance, even against the evil, while He thus extends His mercies to them, equally with the good? Or is the idea of His almost relentless wrath against sinners at all reconcilable with the reason assigned by the Lord Jesus Christ himself for his coming to redeem them? which is, that "God so *loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life" [John iii. 16]: whence it is evident, if Himself is to be believed, that Jesus came and died, not to satisfy the Father's anger, but His love.

But how is this to be reconciled, it may be asked, with such passages as seem expressly to ascribe anger to God,—as when it is said that He "is angry with the wicked every day" [Ps. vii. 11]. We answer, The reconciliation of the two classes of passages is perfectly easy, if we admit, as was shown in our Lecture on the subject, that some parts of the Divine Word speak, in their literal sense, if taken by itself, according to *apparent* truth, whilst others express *genuine* truth in the very letter; and if we understand the former—the apparent—in agreement with the latter—the genuine,—not wresting the genuine to make them agree with the apparent. Two opposite assertions cannot both be true in the same sense: and yet the Holy Word sometimes ascribes anger to God, and sometimes love. These attributes, being directly opposite to each other, He cannot possibly possess both. Nor is the difficulty removed by saying, that He cherishes love for the good and anger against the wicked; since, as we have just seen, many passages affirm that even towards the wicked He cherishes love, and does nothing to them but good.

There is then no way of reconciling such opposite declarations, but by admitting that the passages which ascribe anger to Him are expressed according to the appearance, as it seems to the debased apprehensions of the carnal mind : while those which affirm that He is nothing but Love, describe His nature as it is in itself, and as it is felt to be by the enlightened preceptions of the eminently good. This may be illustrated by many instances in our common conversations, in which, for the sake of convenience, we speak according to the appearance but contrary to the reality ; but which create no confusion where the reality is acknowledged, into which the appearance is turned, as soon as it is mentioned, in the mind of the intelligent hearer. Let us take an example.

It is an *appearance*, that the sun passes round the earth every twenty-four hours ; and hence we always say, in common speech or writing, that the sun rises and sets, is so far before or after its meridian, &c. : and yet the truth is, that the sun, relatively to the earth, never moves at all ; nor do intelligent persons, when they speak of his rising or setting, mean seriously to affirm that he does : for they know that it is the earth which moves, not the sun ; thus that the appearance is just the opposite of the reality : and the reason why they still speak according to the appearance, is, because it would require many more words, and thus be very inconvenient, to speak according to the naked, unclothed truth. To say that the sun moves, is to speak according to the appearance that is presented to our senses, to which it can never appear to be otherwise ; but to think at the same time that the motion is in the earth, is to correct the imperfect and fallacious apprehension of the senses by the assistance of reason and science. So, when the Scripture ascribes anger to God, it speaks according to the appearance as apprehended by the wicked, who can never conceive otherwise : for to think, nevertheless, that all the anger is in man, is only attainable by an elevation of the mind, at least for the moment, out of its evil state, when its former gross apprehensions are corrected by a heavenly illumination. It is then seen that the Holy Scriptures speak genuine truth when they declare that God is Love. Thus, when the Scripture speaks of the Lord as being angry with sinners, it is not that He is really

angry, but that there is such  
verse inclinations and his divi  
them exactly the reverse of  
that the Lord's Divine Love ap  
the anger is not in the Lord, I

This may be illustrated b  
from natural things.

How different is the aspect  
day, from that which it exhibit  
phere full of fog or smoke! (the  
the Lord) is at all times the same, though the earth with its  
atmosphere (which is an emblem of man) is not at all times in  
the same state for receiving his beams of heat and light. Viewed  
through a watery mist, the sun will appear pale and rayless;  
viewed through a cloud of smoke, it will appear lurid and dusky.  
Just so, when the Sun of Righteousness is viewed through the  
dense mental mists and fogs which obscure the perceptions of  
those who are immersed in evil affections, will his benign attri-  
butes seem to suffer perversion. What in Him is love, will  
appear like anger: and the debased beholder, with the wicked in  
the Revelation, will spiritually exclaim at the view, "to the  
mountains and hills" of his own evil loves and false persuasions,  
in which he hardens himself to resist the divine influence, "Fall  
on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the  
throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" [Rev. vi. 16]; though  
the face of Him that sitteth on the throne,—that is the interior  
dispositions of the Essential Divine Nature,—can never cease to  
wear a smiling aspect; and the Lamb—the Divine Humanity—  
will ever be filled with pure love, and burn with the desire of  
imparting it to mankind. So unalterably true is the assertion  
of the Psalmist, that the Lord appears to every one according to  
his state: "With the merciful, thou wilt show Thyself merciful:  
with the upright man, thou wilt show Thyself upright; with the  
pure, thou wilt show Thyself pure; and with the froward, thou  
wilt show Thyself froward" [Ps. xviii. 26]. Can any suppose  
that these differences are in the Lord Himself? No, surely! Is  
it not much more consistent to admit, that the diversity of man's  
states for receiving his influences occasions all the diversity which

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appears to be influences  
I am the Father, and  
Him who benefi-  
and so,

*appears* to be in Him? since He declares of Himself by Malachi, I am the Lord: I *change not* [ch. iii. 6]; by James, that "in Him is *no variableness, neither shadow of turning*" [ch. i. 17]; and by Paul, that He is "*the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever*" [Heb. xiii. 8].

To apply this view to the manner in which man's state by nature, and his salvation through the Lord's Atonement, are generally represented. We have already seen, in this and former Lectures, that man in his fallen state has removed himself to such a distance from the Divine Being, as no longer to be capable of receiving spiritual influences from the pure Divinity uninvested with Humanity. While abiding in this state, and immersed in the dense mental atmosphere, or darkened faculty of perception, suitable to it, the divine perfections cannot possibly appear to him such as they really are, but must suffer as much apparent change as the rays of the sun do in passing through a thick fog. To speak then according to the appearance, such as it is to a man in this state, we may say that the divine vengeance burns against him: and there would be no impropriety in our expressing ourselves in this manner, if we meant, as we do when we speak of the sun rising and setting, the direct reverse, namely, that the evil lusts of the sinner render him un-receptive of the Lord's divine love, and make it appear to him like vengeance. We have seen, also, that by the assumption of the Humanity, the Lord so accommodated His divine influences to the fallen state in which man was, as to reach and affect him even there, and enable him to emerge out of it, and so receive the Lord's love *as love*; and if we were to speak of this in the same kind of language as before, drawn from appearance alone, we might say, that the Son (meaning the Divine Humanity,) satisfied the justice of the Father (or unclothed Divinity,) and turned aside his wrath: meaning, that the divine perfections of righteousness and goodness no longer appeared as vindictive exaction and wrath to the sinner's altered mind. And it would be equally correct to ascribe this atonement, this making of agreement, to the efficacy of the Lord's death: because His death was the last stage of the process by which He made His Humanity Divine; and, we have repeatedly shown, it is only

from His Humanity, thus made Divine, that the saving influences can proceed, by which man is restored to a state of order, and enabled to behold His Maker, such as He really is, All Beneficent, Merciful, and Good ;—who pants not for vengeance, who, as Himself declares, desires not the death of the sinner (neither in person nor in proxy), but had rather he would turn from his wickedness and live !

Thus then we see how easy it is to understand, not only the doctrine of the Atonement itself, but all that is usually said respecting it, in agreement with the great truths, of the Indivisible Unity of the Godhead, the Sole Divinity of Jesus Christ, the concentration of the Trinity in His Sacred Person, and the Unalterable Benevolence of the Divine Nature. The errors that have become common on this subject have all arisen from turning appearances into realities, and understanding that which is said as descriptive of the apprehensions of the carnal minded, as a just representation of the Divine Nature itself. A celebrated writer of hymns, describing the effect of an acceptance of the Lord's atonement by a penitent sinner, says, in reference to the Divine Being, that it

“ — turns His wrath to grace : ”

and this is a true representation, if understood as descriptive of the altered perceptions of the sinner ; but it becomes a gross libel upon the Deity, if the change is believed to be in Him. We have just noticed how strongly the Scripture declares the Immutability of the Lord, which is such that in Him there is not even any “ shadow of *turning* ; ” which divinely inspired declarations we charge with falsehood, when we speak of His *turning* His wrath to grace, if we suppose the turning to be really in Him : whereas this becomes both a significant and convenient form of expression, when understood according to its real force, as referring to the change effected in the sinner's apprehensions. The case is the same with all the passages in the Holy Word which ascribe anger to God, and all the phrases in which, in ordinary language, ministers and others speak of the Atonement. Understand them as we understand each other when we speak of the sun as rising or setting,—as phrases expressive of the apprehensions of our senses, but in which the

sensual apprehension must be corrected by rational and spiritual light, and then we shall obtain correct ideas ; otherwise we fall into errors of the same kind, but of far worse consequences, (as errors in spiritual things are of more importance than errors in natural,) as an astronomer would do who should seriously maintain, that the sun whirls round the earth once every day, and that all the varieties of appearance which he exhibits, arise not from changes in the circumstances of the earth with respect to him, but from positive changes in the sun himself.

I will protract this long Lecture no further. I trust, when what has now been offered is dispassionately weighed, that all not too deeply confirmed in common errors, will admit that we have established all that we proposed, and that the idea of the Atonement which we offer as the doctrine of the true Christian Religion, is far more consistent with the honour of God, as the Father of mercies, than that commonly entertained. May it then be our object to appropriate the benefits wrought for us by the Lord's assumption and glorification of the Humanity. Let us, without dreaming of a momentaneous salvation by a mere faith in what the Lord hath done for us, apply ourselves in humble prayer to this Father of Mercies, with full confidence in His omnipotence as our Saviour, to receive the divine aids thus put within our reach. Let us strive, thus assisted, after that newness of heart and life, by which alone the enmity of our corrupt nature can be removed, and atonement, reconciliation, or agreement, be produced between us and our God.

## LECTURE XXIII.

HOW MAN IS TO PROFIT BY THE DIVINE MERCIES DISPLAYED  
TOWARDS HIM IN THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST, THE  
OFFER OF SALVATION BY HIS BLOOD, HIS MEDIATION, AND  
HIS ATONEMENT.

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JOHN xvii. 19.

*“For their sakes I sanctify myself; that they also might be sanctified through the truth.”*

WE have now arrived, my friends and brethren, at the close of the Series of Lectures in which we have hitherto been engaged, on those doctrines of the True Christian Religion which relate, more especially, to the Author of the Christian Religion and of all Creation, and his wonderful and gracious works for the eternal benefit of his creatures. These Lectures have consisted of two general branches: those of the first class treating of the Nature and Person of the Divine Object of worship, and those of the second of his divine operations for the salvation of mankind. These being all doctrinal subjects, did not admit of my introducing much matter of a directly practical tendency; though I have also endeavoured to connect them throughout, as all true doctrine ever must be connected, with views and considerations calculated to affect the heart and influence the life. But, without departing from the main design of the whole series,—to deliver, on the most important subjects, the genuine doctrines of the true Christian Religion,—it is proposed, in this and some subsequent Lectures, to treat of some doctrines which are more directly practical, and which point out the bearings of the more abstruse and abstract points of the Christian faith upon the life and conduct of those who embrace it. It is of the second

branch of the whole series, and thus of both the preceding, that our Lecture of this evening is properly designed to form the conclusion. For having treated in this second branch of the series, of the redemption of Jesus Christ, and of the other points of the doctrine connected with this subject, it is intended in this Lecture to give the whole a practical bearing, by offering an answer to the inquiry, *How is man to profit by the Divine mercies displayed towards him by the Redemption effected for him by Jesus Christ, by his Sacrifice, by the offer of Salvation by his blood, by his Mediation, Intercession and Advocateship, and by his Atonement?* in other words, *What is the nature and extent of the benefits procured for man by these divine works of his Saviour God?*

We must bear in mind what these divine operations in themselves actually are, as they have been explained in our former Lectures; that Redemption, properly and strictly so called, consisted in man's deliverance from the preponderating power of hell, through the Lord's permitting the infernal powers to assault with temptations his Humanity taken from the virgin, and thus subduing and removing them: that the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ is the complete devotion, dedication, and sanctification of his Human Nature to his Divine, so as to be perfectly assimilated to his Divinity and so entirely glorified, as to become the proper form of the Divinity itself, for its complete and full indwelling, not as in an extraneous subject, but as the soul in its own body, and thus to be the proper organ for the exercise of the Divine Omnipotence: that Salvation is procured through the blood of Jesus Christ, because by his blood is signified, in a natural sense, his death, and without his death his glorification could not have been effected; and because, also, by his blood, in a spiritual sense, is signified and represented his Divine Truth, which proceeds from his glorified Humanity for the salvation of mankind, being the same thing as is meant by the Holy Spirit, when it is said, that the Holy Spirit was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified: that the Mediation and Intercession of Jesus Christ consist in the access which is afforded for man to God in the Lord's Glorified Humanity, and in the communication from God to man, by the same blessed medium, of the gifts and



graces necessary for his salvation, in a form and with a power accommodated to his state: and that the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the reconciliation effected for man with God, by first glorifying the human nature in his own sacred person, and from the humanity thus glorified in himself, operating for its purification in those who look to him for the purpose, thus removing the contrariety between fallen humanity and divine purity, and reconciling, atoning, or making them *at one* again.

What then is the regular result of these divine works of the Lord for the benefit of man? What is the way of salvation thus opened before him? Clearly this: Man is thus placed again, every individual for himself, as Adam was in paradise,—in a free state of probation. The corruptions and evils of human nature, as it exists in mankind, are neither abolished, nor removed, nor made of no account, by the redeeming acts of the Lord; but man is put in such state, that, notwithstanding his own infirmities, he can freely receive divine aids from the Lord, and thus be drawn out of them and delivered from them. In a word, every man is redeemed,—is delivered from the preponderating power of hell, so as not to be its slave any further than he chooses to remain or make himself so; and salvation, which is man's individual and final deliverance from hell and elevation into heaven, is freely offered to his acceptance, and put fully within his reach. But whether a man, individually, shall be saved or not, depends upon whether or not he walks in the way of salvation thus opened before him, makes use of the mercies offered him, and complies with the conditions on which salvation is tendered. Man, we see too palpably, still continues to be prone to sin, and too many recklessly persevere in the commission of it: and Jesus Christ, we know did not come to save men *in* their sins, but *from* their sins, as was declared by the angel who announced his approaching birth [Matt. i. 21]: and men can only be saved from their sins, as, by virtue of the power communicated by the influence proceeding from the Lord's Glorified Humanity, they desist from them, forsake them, and cultivate the opposite graces of heart and life imparted from the same source. According to the declaration of Jesus in our text, he sanctified himself for the sake of his people: not that his sanctification

would of itself communicate sanctification to them, or would do instead of it; but that they also might be sanctified through the truth. As he says on another occasion to some believing Jews: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" [John viii. 31, 32]. What freedom is meant? Doubtless, freedom from the dominion of sin and evil. How is this to be effected by knowing the truth, when many appear to *know* the truth who yet disgrace it by their lives? Doubtless, this freedom only follows, when man obeys it also. "If ye *keep* my commandments," saith Jesus again, "ye shall abide in my love" [John x. 10]. In the same manner, by obeying the truth, man is sanctified through the truth. And this sanctification of man is a consequence of the Lord's having sanctified his Humanity; because, thus, and no otherwise, could the power be imparted to man of yielding this all-necessary obedience. Man's sanctification is his regeneration, or his being formed anew after the divine image and likeness: and the Lord's sanctification was his glorification, or the complete assimilation of his Humanity to the nature of his Divinity.

Let us proceed then to inquire respecting the terms of salvation, as they are offered to man under the dispensation of the Christian Religion, and to enable him to comply with which is the design of his redemption by the Lord.

I. In the first place, it may be useful to show, that the Christian is a conditional dispensation; or that, under the dispensation of Christianity, certain terms or conditions of salvation are proposed, the compliance with which on the part of man is indispensable to his attaining it.

I make some observations on this subject, because I am well aware, that there are some classes of the professors of the Christian Religion, who dislike the mention of anything like terms and conditions in reference to salvation. It is common to hear it affirmed, that salvation is all of free grace; and that free grace excludes the idea of anything to be done on the part of man, and is inconsistent with the notion of terms or conditions. We readily admit that man's salvation is all of free grace: but it is impossible to admit with truth, that this excludes every-

thing conditional. Salvation is of free grace, because everything necessary to effect it is of the Lord alone. The whole work of Redemption was the work of the Lord alone, independently altogether of man. All the graces necessary to constitute a state of salvation are of the Lord alone, and not one of them can originate with man. The mercies which man is invited to accept are freely offered him by the Lord; and its being left to his own choice whether he will accept them or not, does not diminish the freeness of the grace by which they are offered, but raises it higher. If, for example, the sovereign of this country were to offer to every one of us a station of dignity and wealth; surely the free munificence of the offer would not be diminished, were we to be left freely to choose for ourselves whether or not we would accept it! Nor yet would the free munificence of the offer be diminished, if certain personal qualifications were annexed to the station, provided the means of attaining those qualifications were also freely put within our reach. But the free gifts of our heavenly Sovereign extend still farther than this,—farther than the munificence of any being whose power is not infinite can possibly do. For not only is a station of the highest dignity, even that of reigning, as it is expressed in Scripture, in heaven with our Lord, freely offered to us all; not only are the means of acquiring the qualifications necessary to the enjoyment of this exalted station freely put within our reach; but the very capacity of making use of those means, of which, of ourselves, we should be destitute, is freely and unceasingly communicated to us also; so that, although this power never at any moment belongs to us as our own, it is constantly, at every moment, imparted to us by the Lord. Thus, if conditions, such as themselves tend to exalt our nature, are prescribed for us to accede to, the power of complying with those conditions is, by free grace, ever afforded us: and this constitutes the noblest of the Lord's free gifts to man, being that which raises us from the condition of brute animals to that of rational creatures.

Now this doctrine,—that man's salvation depends upon his acceptance of, and compliance with, the conditions upon which it is offered, is most abundantly asserted in the Word of God.

Indeed, the whole of the Sacred Scriptures, from one end to the other, proceed upon this supposition: what else is meant by the frequent use of the little particle *if*, so constantly employed in them, when they treat of man's acceptance with his Maker? Many are fond of ridiculing the notion of there being any *ifs* with God: certainly, however, in his transactions with man, whose actions are contingent by the very constitution of his nature, this conditional particle is continually put by the Scriptures in the Lord's mouth. A few instances will prove the fact.

If ever there could be any instance in which the Lord made choice of man, or of any set of men, unconditionally, to be the objects of his favour, we should expect to find it in the case of the Israelites, who were appointed to constitute the future visible church of the Lord, in his promise made to Abraham, hundreds of years before the nation came into existence: but that even this promise, as regarded the Israelites themselves, was entirely conditional, is evident from the divine declaration to them immediately after their deliverance from Egypt. We read in Exodus xix. that "The Lord called unto Moses out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself: Now, therefore, *if* ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." Here we are presented with a picture of the whole divine economy in regard to man's salvation. The first operations for effecting it are wholly of the Lord: he has accomplished for man the work of redemption, and rescued him from bondage to the infernal powers, and thus put him in a capacity to determine freely whether he will serve the Lord or no; as he brought the children of Israel, by his own might, out of Egypt: He likewise offers his divine gifts to man,—even all that is here representatively described by their being to him a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation: and he thus desires to enter into a covenant with man. But a covenant is an agreement or treaty between two parties, by which they

respectively bind themselves to the performance of certain acts. Thus every covenant has its conditions, and is binding on each party respectively, only so long as the conditions are performed by the other. God, we are certain, never can fail in the performance of his share of the covenant that he makes with man ; which is, to bestow on him eternal happiness, and at the same time to impart to him all the aids necessary to his procuring the qualifications requisite for its enjoyment : and man's share of the covenant merely is, to accept and make use of the mercies afforded him. *If* (to borrow the constant language of the Divine Word on the subject—*if*) man adheres to his part of the conditions, all the promised blessings are assuredly his own : *if* he refuses to do this ; if he refuses to go to heaven unless driven there by irresistible force (in which case, supposing it possible, his heart would still be in hell), he annuls the covenant, and excludes himself from its benefits.

Numberless passages might be adduced from the Old Testament, in which this conditional little word *if*, followed by an enumeration of the requisites in which the conditions consist, is introduced, where the means of acceptance with God are stated. But perhaps quotations from the Old Testament would be regarded as the mere dictates of the law, which many strangely regard as contrary to the gospel. To the gospel itself then let us turn. "*Except* ye repent," says the Lord Jesus Christ to the Jews,—which is the same thing as, "*If* ye repent not,—ye shall all likewise perish" [Luke xiii. 5]. "*If* ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" [John viii. 24]. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, *if* ye have love one to another" [John xiii. 35]. "*If* thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" [Matt. xix. 17]. "If ye know these things, happy are ye *if* ye do them" [John xiii. 17]. Plain declarations these, which demonstrate, that under the Christian dispensation, as under the Jewish—under the gospel as under the law,—the mercies offered, as to the final enjoyment of them, are conditional. The passages I have cited also state very clearly what the conditions are,—that they are, especially, repentance,—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,—love or charity,—and the life of love or charity, or good works.

Plain enough then it appears to be, if we take our conceptions of religion from the Scriptures, and from the most explicit declarations of the Lord Jesus Christ, that salvation is proposed to us in the gospel on certain terms or conditions ; and plain enough also it is, as just remarked, what the terms and conditions are,—that they are repentance, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, charity and good works.

II. We will make a few observations upon each of these subjects.

1. The first, then, of the leading graces which exhibit themselves in the mind of man, in his progress from a merely carnal state to a spiritual one, or from a state of nature to a state of grace, is, unquestionably, that of repentance :—or repentance is that condition of the acceptance of man with God which is first to be complied with. As the foundation for every thing else, we find repentance continually mentioned. Thus, in the first place, in which the preaching under the gospel dispensation is spoken of (in Matt. iii.) we find no mention of any condition for becoming a subject of the kingdom of heaven but repentance : and this, by a beautiful figure, is proclaimed by John, the forerunner of Jesus as the necessary pre-requisite to the acknowledgement and acceptance of the Saviour—thus as an indispensable preliminary to the reception of faith in him. “ In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye—for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” We also find (in the next chapter), that, in the beginning, the preaching of Jesus consisted in precisely the same exhortation : As soon as his temptation was ended, the evangelist informs us, that “ from that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” [Matt. iv. 17]. The same was the burthen of the preaching of the twelve apostles, when first they were sent forth by their Divine Master : After he had given them their instructions, it is said, as Mark relates the history, that “ they went out, and preached every where that men should repent” [Mark vi. 12]. So in his final instructions to them after his resurrection, as given in Luke, he taught them, “ that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” [Luke xxiv. 47].

And the Apostles inform us themselves, that they were obedient to this mandate. Peter concludes his first sermon with saying, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins" [Acts ii. 38]. Near the conclusion of his second sermon he exclaims, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" [Acts iii. 19]. So Paul, when preaching at Athens, after noticing the then general prevalence of idolatry, says, "And the times of this ignorance, God winked at: but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent" [Acts xvii. 30]. And when, taking leave of the Ephesian elders, he reminds them of what had composed the substance of his preaching while among them, he says, "Ye know—how I kept back nothing that was profitable for you, but have showed you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house,"—What did he thus so diligently show and teach?—he continues,—“testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” [Acts xx. 18—20].

From this evidence, and much more that might be adduced, it appears abundantly clear, that Repentance is the first thing that follows the reception by man of the divine grace which the Lord is ever waiting to bestow. In point of time, it precedes everything else that truly constitutes the church in the human mind: for though the mind must previously have been prepared by instruction, and by divine influences, to set about the work of repentance, yet nothing that man has received, until this work is begun, has introduced him really, and as to his spirit, into the church, or has given the graces of the church a real admission into his mind. Till he has begun the work of repentance, the knowledge that he may have obtained respecting the Lord Jesus Christ does not amount to anything that can properly be called faith. As is affirmed in the doctrines of the New Church, repentance is the very beginning, and first foundation, of the church in man; or of all the heavenly graces with which the mind of the real member of the church should be replenished. It is the very first step towards man's acceptance with God. However cultivated and accomplished his mind may be,—even supposing it replenished with the most extensive knowledge re-

specting divine and heavenly things ; if repentance have not begun to operate in a man, he is as yet an utter alien to God and his kingdom. It is not the only thing necessary to his acceptance with God and establishment in his kingdom, but it is the first. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ must follow, with other heavenly graces : but if repentance have not gone before to prepare the way of the Lord and to make his paths straight,—that is, to open the door for the reception of the Lord and of saving faith in him, these can never enter. Therefore it was that John the Baptist,—the great preacher of repentance,—came as the forerunner of Jesus Christ.

Repentance then being a thing so indispensable to man's acceptance with God, wherein does it consist ? Here, I am aware, though the matter is quite plain on a little reflection, and on considering what is said of repentance in the Word of God, many are apt to entertain defective notions. Repentance is generally defined to be a sorrow for sin. Doubtless, without sorrow for sin there can be no real repentance : yet it is a great mistake to suppose that Repentance actually consists in this sorrow. A man may even be sorry for his sins, without ever repenting of them at all : that is, he may regret his sinful acts, and yet cherish the love of the evils from which the acts proceed. A criminal who has run through a career of the deepest enormity, when brought to justice, will feel sorry for the acts which have brought him into such a situation, and wish he had never committed them : but a man can know little of the human heart who supposes, that he at once loses his love of the vices which have led to such fatal results : set him at liberty, and remove the dread of death or suffering for a while from his thoughts, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he will return with renewed zest to his former criminal habits. What is found to be the conduct of the great majority of those, who after having had the halter round their necks, and having made the most solemn promises of amendment in case of their life being spared, have been transported to New South Wales ? The accounts from that colony have informed us, that they seldom are reclaimed ; but that, with few exceptions, they pursue there the same course of life, as had been made, by habit, their second nature here.



Although then a real sorrow must attend a repentance from evil courses, it is injurious so to represent sorrow for sin as constituting an essential part of repentance, as to lead the uninformed to mistake it for the whole: for on this subject, self-deceit is so very easy; and a man may so easily mistake a dread of the painful consequences of sin, for a sorrow for sin itself. So far is mere contrition from constituting the whole, or the most essential part, of repentance, that in the word by which repentance is expressed in the original of the New Testament, the idea of contrition is absolutely not included.\* It has been from drawing the ideas of spiritual subjects, as was done entirely by the Roman Catholic Church, merely from the ancient Latin version of the Scriptures called the Vulgate, that the idea of pain and contrition came to be considered as so important a part of the doctrine of Repentance: and the ideas thus introduced by the Roman Catholics have continued to influence us, though we have abandoned the peculiar tenets of their religion. The word that signifies *to repent*, in the Latin language, literally means, *It pains me*, or, *It gives me pain*: but the Greek root that signifies pain does not enter into the composition of the word which, in the New Testament, is used to express *repenting*, at all. The word is a compound one, derived from that which signifies *the mind*, and the preposition that signifies *after*, and which in composition expresses *change*: Thus the word may either be considered as signifying, to come into a state of sound mind, after having been in a different state,—or, to experience a change in the state of the mind. Consequently, it denotes very nearly the same thing, as is expressed in the Scriptural idea of the word “conversion,”—the turning of the mind in a different direction from that in which it was turned before. Now, no doubt, this will always be attended with contrition in those who undergo it, and in proportion to the extent in which they may previously have fallen into the practice of actual evil; but this explanation shows clearly that contrition is not at all of the essence of Repentance, which properly consists in a return to a sound state of mind—in changing the mind in a new direction, turning it from evil to good, and from a preference to false notions of spiritual things to a love of the pure truth.

But perhaps, some may think, that whatever may be the case with others, they themselves, not having fallen into the practice of any very flagitious evils, have no need of repentance : or if there are few whose minds are so blinded by self-love as to form this opinion in regard to themselves, yet they may think it possible that a child of good natural dispositions may be so carefully brought up, by being kept from bad company and nurtured by good precept and example, as that nothing amounting to repentance may ever be necessary for his eternal welfare. If repentance consisted merely in contrition, it is possible, and but barely possible, that this might be the case : but it is a most decided fact, that such a change of mind as true repentance implies, from a natural and carnal state towards a spiritual and heavenly one, must take place with every human being before he can be prepared for the kingdom of heaven ; although, in some, this may be effected more imperceptibly than in others. For it is a certain fact that every one has tendencies to evil, and those of the deepest malignity, inherent in his nature, whether he be altogether aware of this or not ; and if ever he enters heaven, these must previously be subdued and removed. To this end, then, in those who are prepared for that kingdom, though there is no necessity that they should fall into the practice of great evils, as some have affirmed, to make them the more sensible of their own inherent unworthiness, yet temptations are sure to come upon them to awaken their consciousness that they have such propensities within them : and then they exercise the work of repentance,—a change is effected in the state of their minds,—by turning from the evil that they feel or discover, resisting the temptation to practise it, and looking to the Lord to be endowed with the opposite good.

2. When man is sincere in performing the work of repentance, or in turning from his evil ways, he will be enabled to exercise a real faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in his salvation. This will introduce into his mind the still higher grace of Christian charity ; and both, in union, will become operative in good works. But having dwelt so long upon the doctrine of repentance, I must only touch very briefly at present upon these other conditions of salvation. We shall speak of them further in subsequent Lectures.

It is certainly not without reason that the teachers of Christianity have been urgent in insisting upon the principle of faith as one of its most essential graces, and most indispensable requisites ; although, when, in modern times, some have stretched this truth beyond its proper limits, affirming, not only that faith is indispensable, but that it is all that is necessary to constitute a Christian ; or, in other words, that faith alone is all that is necessary to salvation ; they have established a maxim which is inconsistent with all Divine truth ; and while they thought they were exalting and honoring the principle of faith, they have changed its nature, and in effect destroyed it. The principle of faith, is of great moment in forming the mind to the feelings and sentiments of the true Christian, but the principle of charity is of still greater. This is the Doctrine of the Apostle Paul : he says, " Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing ;" after which he adds, " and now abide faith, hope, and charity, these three ; but the greatest of these is charity" [1 Cor. xiii. 2, 13].

But though the position that faith alone constitutes the whole of saving religion is so little consistent with Scripture, and is also so opposed to every suggestion of reason, that one might wonder how the human mind could ever conceive and publish such an idea ; and although it is most evident that charity also must be an indispensable requisite to salvation ; there seems to be more room to doubt which of the two is of the more importance ; or, had not the Apostle, as just quoted, decided the question, which of the two is the greater. Certain it is that great stress is laid upon faith both by the Lord himself and his apostle. The Lord continually urges the necessity of faith in himself as a qualification for receiving any gift or favor from him : and Paul declares that without faith it is impossible to please God. In some places, also, he speaks of our being justified by faith ; but it is certain, that, in such passages, as is acknowledged by Bishop Burnet [*on the Thirty-nine Articles*], he does not mean the principle or grace of faith as distinguished from other Christian graces, but the Christian religion or dispensation in general, with all the spiritual graces belonging to it ; wherefore he then contrasts it with the law, and the works of the law ; because by

the law he means the Jewish dispensation in general, and by its works the carnal observances in which the greater part of that dispensation consisted, with the merely superficial obedience to the moral law which was all that that dispensation gave power to render. Yet this remarkable distinction is to be observed: that though the Lord always speaks of faith as necessary to the obtaining of gifts from him, he always speaks of charity and its duties as the means of obtaining final acceptance with him. When asked what should be done to inherit eternal life, he replied, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" [Matt. xix. 16, 17]. So we see that Paul, when he is not speaking of the Christian religion in general by the name of faith, but of the specific grace so termed, affirms, most decidedly, the pre-eminence of charity.

From these facts this conclusion results: That faith is necessary as the means of obtaining from the Lord that purification of the heart and life of which the cures that he wrought upon those who believed in his power were types; and also, as affording the light necessary for pointing out how the higher principle of charity should go forth into exercise: but that charity in the heart is the principle at which the Lord looks when he decides upon man's final state. Thus faith is, in fact, the medium by which charity is acquired: it leads to it, as the means to the end. Faith is first in point of time; but charity is first in point of dignity. Where both exist, they will manifest themselves in the life of charity, or good works; which thus are the criterion of their actual existence in the mind.

3. That the grace of good works, flowing from an inward principle of love, is peculiarly regarded by the Lord, is evident from this remarkable fact: that he never mentions anything else when the determination of man's eternal state, his final judgment, is treated of. It is by the presence of this principle that man is elevated to heaven, by its absence that he is rejected to hell. Though faith is made by the Lord an indispensable requisite to the reception of divine gifts from him, yet, necessary as it is, it is never once mentioned when the decision of man's eternal estate is described; nor is even charity expressly adverted to, any otherwise than as it is necessarily included in its inseparable concomitants,

the works of charity or practical goodness. How impressive is that striking description which the Lord gives of the safety of the wise man who doeth his commandments, and of the ruin of the fool who neglects them! "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, because it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man that built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" [Matt. vii. 24—27]. It is doing, then, or not doing, on which man's final state depends. But how inexpressibly affecting is the Lord's most fully detailed description of the final judgment, when the acceptance of the sheep and rejection of the goats is so pathetically shown to depend on their having practised, or neglected, the works of charity.—"Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then,"—with that unconsciousness of anything like merit in themselves,—that humility which ever accompanies true charity,—"then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And,"—imputing to them,—such is the Divine mercy of the Lord, and such the true doctrine of imputation,—the good which they had done from him,—"the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was a hungered, and ye

gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him,"—with the self-sufficiency, and unwillingness to acknowledge any deficiency in themselves, which however they may disclaim it, inwardly belongs to those, who, without charity, are in the persuasion that they shall be saved by faith alone,—“Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of these, ye did it not to me.” The awful conclusion follows: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal” [Matt. xxv. 34—46]. Now, though the works here mentioned as being done by the one class, and neglected by the other, must, in their spiritual sense, involve more than is presented in the letter,—works more general and universal in their application,—yet this is perfectly evident: That the works of charity, in their most extensive acceptation, are what are intended: and it certainly is quite impossible, by any ingenuity of explanation, to do away with this plain declaration of what are the real terms of acceptance with God. Those terms indisputably are, good works,—not works which may appear as good upon a superficial inspection, but those which are recognised as such by the exploring eye of an All-seeing Judge: and these are such words and actions only as flow from a principle of genuine charity, which is charity united with faith, and consequent upon repentance from evil works,—a constant determination to a good and useful life, and to the performance of deeds of real beneficence, springing from pure benevolence, the love of the Lord and our neighbour, enlightened and guided by faith in his holy name.

Such then, my friends and brethren, is the way of salvation which the Lord has set before us, and such the manner in which we are to profit by the Lord's great works for us, and mercies towards us, in our redemption: we are to accept eternal life upon the conditions on which He offers it, which are, by doing the work of repentance, and by cultivating the graces of faith and

charity, and the practice of good works. He that doeth these things shall never be moved. His salvation is sure: and still all the merit of it belongs to the Lord, from whom all the will and all the ability proceed, and whose Holy Spirit operates, with those who look to Him, with sufficient energy to produce them, in consequence of his having united Humanity to Divinity in his glorious Person.

## LECTURE XXIV.

CHARITY, AND NOT FAITH, THE FIRST ESSENTIAL OF PURE  
CHRISTIANITY.

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JOHN XV. 12—14.

*“ This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”*

IF the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ had always taken their doctrines from the express declarations of their Divine Master himself, how different an aspect would the Christian Religion have assumed and maintained, from that which, during a long period, it has borne among mankind ! Instead of this, however,—instead of drawing their religious sentiments from the immediate words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself,—they have for the most part, preferred to take them from one or two sentences in the writings of one of his apostles ;—for it is only in one or two sentences in the writings of one of the apostles that any colour can be found for that doctrine, which, according to the representation of the celebrated but sometimes mistaken reformer Luther, still frequently re-echoed by teachers of the present day, forms the distinguishing criterion of a standing or a falling church—the doctrine of justification and salvation by faith alone. It is perfectly true that the language of this Apostle, correctly interpreted, and as understood by himself, is and must be, as we shall see in the sequel, perfectly consistent with the instructions of his Divine Master the Lord Jesus Christ :—and far be it from me to say, that erroneous doctrines,—such as are inconsistent with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ himself,



find any real sanction in the writings of the Apostle of whom we are speaking: But that Apostle, in the warmth of his controversies with Jews and Judaizing teachers of Christianity, which form so great a portion of his writings, has, in a few instances, dropt expressions, which, taken by themselves, *might* be supposed to favour the notion of faith as the only requisite to salvation. Upon these have framers of doctrinal systems eagerly seized, and, without regard to the peculiar circumstances under which the writings of the Apostles were penned, or understanding the peculiar notions against which they were directed, have put upon certain phrases their own construction: and on this sandy foundation have they erected a system of doctrine, as unlike the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and of all the other Apostles, as are the shapeless carvings of the South-Sea Islanders to the beauteous sculptures of classic Greece. This they have done, I say, although nothing similar is to be found in the writings of any of the other Apostles, or in the living instructions of their Divine Master. Of the four other apostolic writers whose epistles remain, John and Jude contain nothing which can, by any violence, be construed into an approbation of the doctrine of faith alone, but much that is directly opposed to it; Peter expressly warns his readers of things in the writings of Paul which are hard to be understood, and which they that are unlearned may easily wrest to their own destruction; and James would appear to have written purposely to contradict the notion of salvation by faith without works, and as if he had the unguarded expressions of Paul immediately in his eye. Commentators, indeed, usually take great pains to warn the reader against this supposition; but they have no data on which to found its refutation. Strange, then, indeed, does it appear, that when none of the writers of the New Testament but one, lend the smallest apparent countenance to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and that one only in a few expressions, which, if so understood, would contradict all the rest of his writings, those few expressions should have been laid hold of to found upon them such a doctrine! But doubtless, in this mystery, a secret cause has been in operation, and there has been exerted the permissive hand of the Lord's Divine Providence. Men are

always led to accommodate their doctrines in regard to faith to their state in regard to charity ; hence, when charity decays, the Church is irresistibly inclined to adopt for its creed the notion of the all-sufficiency of faith. Now the Lord predicted that this would come to be the state of the Christian Church itself :—“ Because,” he says, “ iniquity will abound, the love of many will wax cold ” [Matt. xxiv. 12]. When charity expires, faith becomes perverted, or a genuine faith exists no more ; whence the Lord, again alluding to the same times, says, “ When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth ? ” [Luke xviii. 8]. When a true faith becomes extinct, a false one takes its place. When charity dies, men persuade themselves that there is no occasion for it, but that faith alone, such perverted faith as then prevails—is sufficient for all purposes ; and thus originates the mistaken sentiment of justification by faith alone. As then, to establish such a faith, they would pervert and profane the essential Word of God itself,—even the words which the Living Word—the Word Incarnate—spoke while on earth,—to prevent this it was permitted that in the Epistles of Paul, which are commonly though mistakenly regarded as equally divine, such phraseology should be introduced as might more easily be applied in confirmation of such perverted faith ; and thus the framers of erroneous systems fastened upon these writings, directed thither all their eagerness of attention, and sought thence the confirmations of their darling persuasions ; thus leaving, in a great degree, the very Word of God unfalsified and untouched, and not incurring such guilt as would have resulted from applying, more actively and directly, those lively oracles themselves in support of such injurious inventions. Thus viewed, what mercy and goodness is seen in the permission, that passages so easily abused should have dropped from the pen of the Apostle Paul ; affording the means to the framers of false doctrines of doing that in a manner comparatively innocent, which they could not be prevented from doing altogether.

But had not this predilection for falsity rather than truth existed ; and had the leaders of the Church, drawn their systems of doctrine from the sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and from those parts of the apostolic writings which plainly

deliver the same sentiments ; how beautiful a body of Christian doctrine should we then have seen ! And if, as would then also have been more the case, the lives of the professing disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ had been framed according to such truly enlightened views of doctrine, so that their practice should form a living comment upon their principles, what a glorious and truly attractive aspect would the Christian religion have presented before the world ! There would then have been no room to raise a doubt, as some philosophers of high name have done, whether the establishment of the Christian religion has really improved the condition of society ; still less would there have been afforded the slightest colour to the unjust reproach of infidels, who, looking at the dissensions, wars, and massacres, which have arisen or been perpetrated under the pretence of religion, have endeavoured to raise a prejudice against Christianity itself, as the source of the greatest evils and miseries that have ever torn to pieces the communities of mankind. Although this is a gross calumny, yet it is but too true that the conduct of the professors of Christianity, as a body, has been a practical comment, not upon the genuine principles of Christianity itself, but upon the errors which have been substituted in their place. Having at an early period divided asunder the Divine Being himself in their ideas of him ; having, about the same time, begun to regard the profession of a right faith as of more importance than a life of charity ; and having at length given a positive form to this principle, by declaring salvation to depend upon faith alone ; they, as the natural consequence of such principles, have been continually disputing with one another about doctrinal questions, often of the most trifling and unimportant nature, and have, upon such grounds, treated one another with the greatest bitterness, rancour, and cruelty. Such are the natural and necessary fruits of a doctrine, which places faith in the first place and charity in the second,—especially when it goes so far as to deny to charity any concern in man's salvation. In proportion as respect for charity, or a sense of its necessity diminishes, it ceases to be cultivated and practised. Had however, as in the primitive times, charity continued to be regarded, as the Scriptures most positively teach, as the very first essential of all re-

ligion, separate from which the purest system of faith is of no avail, very different must have been the result. Holding such sentiments from the heart, men would have cultivated charity with a zeal proportioned to their sense of its importance; and, where charity thus reigns, varieties of opinion respecting points of faith, instead of creating division and enmity, are only like the various precious stones in a royal crown, contributing, by the harmonious splendour of their various colours, to the beauty and magnificence of the whole. So, various views of truth, as so many precious stones, when all set in the pure gold of charity, will not divide a church, but add to its universality, and thus to its perfection. Persons, also, thus principled in charity, are not offended with others for not receiving their sentiments; much less can they regard them as enemies, and persecute them, on that account: for they know that every one has a capacity for perceiving truth according to the interior state of his life in regard to charity; and from charity in themselves they think charitably of others. The varieties also of opinion on doctrinal matters which might exist in a church where true spiritual charity prevails, would always be confined to points of minor importance, and would not reach to essentials. All, for instance, would then look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Source of every blessing, and worship him as God alone. For pure spiritual charity can come from no other origin than from the divine love of the Lord Jesus Christ; and coming from Him, it includes in its bosom the acknowledgment of Him. Charity from the Lord in the human soul is like the magnetic virtue imparted to a piece of steel; the faith imbued with it turns undeviatingly to Him, as the needle to the pole.

The view thus presented of what would be the doctrine and life of Christians if they took their principles as to each from the instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, is most evident from those words of his which I have read as a text. These words too, it must be remembered, are not, like the few passages of Paul on which the doctrine of justification by faith alone has been constructed, in opposition, when interpreted as teaching the prime importance of charity, to the whole tenor of the Lord's divine instructions elsewhere; but all those instructions

manifestly teach and confirm the same doctrine. There is, from sacred causes, or for divine reasons, a great and manifest difference in the style of the four gospels which relate the history of the life upon earth of the Lord Jesus Christ; and his divine discourses, for instance, related in Matthew, are very different in their form and general character from those which are given in John; but in respect to the main tenor and burden of them all, as inculcating the primary importance of charity and its duties, there is no difference whatever. In Matthew we are presented with more parables, and the Lord appears to speak in a style more manifestly symbolic, or in which the meaning is more veiled over by natural images; and in John the pure truth of the spiritual sense commonly shines forth more manifestly from the letter; but from the beginning of the Lord's discourses in the sermon on the mount, as given in Matthew, to his dying words on the cross, as given in Luke and John, it is impossible to draw any other conclusion from anything said by him, than that the first principle of his religion, that which, above everything else, He requires of his disciples, is charity. It is true that he also insists on the necessity of faith, or of believing in Him, because, without such belief, it is impossible to obtain purification from evils, and thus to receive charity; yet charity is obviously the end to guide to which faith is enjoined, and to form which in his disciples is the object of all the Lord's divine tenderness and solicitude.

This doctrine—that charity or love is the grand thing by which the Lord's true disciples are to be distinguished,—is most explicitly advanced in our text with its context. The chapter commences with the beautiful parable of the vine and its branches,—the vine symbolizing the Lord himself, and the branches his disciples. This parable he concludes with saying, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. [John xv. 6]. He pursues this idea of the necessity of abiding in Him, by proceeding to show both the blessings that will attend it, and the means of accomplishing it. "If," says he, "ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein

is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit : so shall ye be my disciples" [ver. 7, 8]. It seems then, that to be the Lord's disciples at all, we must bear the fruit of good works, or of the life of charity. He proceeds : "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you : continue (or *abide*, for it is the same word in the original—*abide*) ye in my love" [Ver. 9]. Here we see, that to abide in the Lord, as a branch in the vine, is to abide in his love : he proceeds to show how this is to be secured : "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love ; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain (or abide—for it is still the same word) in you, and that your joy might be full" [Ver. 10, 11]. To abide then in the Lord's love, and thus to abide in him, it is necessary, he assures us, to keep his commandments : and now, in our text, he declares what his commandments are, and condenses them into one : "This," he says, "is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you" [Ver. 12]. This is what his disciples are to do in order to abide in his love, to be his disciples indeed, and to abide in him as branches in the vine. This is peculiarly, and above every thing else, his commandment. He sums up the whole of his precepts and requirements into one injunction, and declares this to be it. So in the 13th chapter, in the same series of discourse, he had given the same precept with even, if possible, greater emphasis : "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another :"—for here he adds the remarkable words, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" [Ver. 34]. This then was to be the distinguishing mark of a Christian—not his faith, but his love. By this, according to the intention and decree of the Divine Founder of Christianity, his disciples were to be known ; and if this be absent, it matters not how loudly they may make profession of their faith ; they do not belong to Him. According to the Lord's saying on another occasion, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works—(all marks, it

must be admitted, of strong faith :) and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" [Matt. vii. 22, 23]. Thus, both negatively and positively, the Lord Jesus Christ constantly declares, that charity or mutual love is the primary characteristic of his religion,—is that upon which every thing else depends,—the principle by which his followers were to be known,—the one commandment in which all others are included. And it is to be observed that he here speaks, not of the commandments of the Mosaic law, but of *his* commandment—the main precept of his gospel. When asked which was the great commandment of the law, he answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: this is the first and great commandment." To this, unasked, he adds, "And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And he adds further, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" [Matt. xxii. 38—40]. But this strong evidence, supported by his added declaration to the inquirer in Luke, "This do, and thou shalt live" [Ch. x. 28], is set aside by the strenuous champions of faith alone, by the assertion, that these commandments are only referred to as the commandments of the law, which is superseded by the gospel; and that although it would be true that, if we *could* keep them we should live, yet this we are unable to do, and therefore cannot have eternal life in any such manner;—thus representing Jesus as trifling with an earnest inquirer by using subterfuge and mental reservation. But suppose for a moment, it were so, —suppose, notwithstanding his express declaration, that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, he really did abolish by the gospel both the ceremonial and the moral law, as given by Moses:—we see he here re-enacts its cardinal precept by his own authority; extending, indeed, the charity, or love of the neighbour, prescribed by Moses, into the higher principle—the new commandment of mutual love—of love to one another, to be copied, as to its character, from his love to us.

Seeing then that charity, which is the same thing as love, is the first thing on which the Lord Jesus Christ insists as essential to the being a disciple of his, it is necessary that we should form

just conceptions as to what the nature of this truly heavenly grace is. And here we cannot have a better guide than that Apostle, who has so strangely been supposed to resolve the whole of the Christian religion into faith alone. According to the plainest teaching of the Apostle Paul, charity is the grace which imparts to all others their genuine character, and destitute of which no other gift whatsoever is of any avail towards salvation. "Though," says he, in 1 Cor. xiii., "I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains; and have not charity, I am nothing" [Ver. 1, 2]. Here we have the clearest declaration of the necessity of charity, as consisting in a principle of love in the heart, to give value to the highest intellectual attainments, even to faith itself. We seldom hear, in modern times, even among those who extol faith most highly, and abide in it most confidently, of any who pretend by means of it to perform miraculous works; and if any of them could, by the exercise of faith, do any act beyond the ordinary powers of nature, they doubtless would boast of it as a most incontrovertible proof of the efficacy for salvation of faith alone. Not so, however, the heaven-taught Apostle; he declares, we see, that even such a faith as would remove mountains, separate from charity, would avail him nothing.

Having thus shown the worthlessness of even the most powerful faith, if unconnected with charity, he shows, in the same manner, the worthlessness of outward works, when not performed under the influence of this principle. For it is a great mistake to suppose, as many do, that charity means mere almsgiving: charity is love; and the giving of alms, the display of zeal, or any other outwardly beneficent act, when it does not proceed from a principle of love in the heart, is a mere outward husk, destitute of the kernel or pulp for the sake of which alone the husk is esteemed. Therefore the Apostle proceeds to say, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor; and though I give my body to be burned; and have not charity,



it profiteth me nothing" [Ver. 3]. We may hence see what the Apostle means when he sometimes speaks in depreciation of what he calls the works of the law. By the law he means the Jewish dispensation, which only set temporal rewards before its subjects : and works done from obedience to a law which merely promises rewards in this life, only proceed from the external man and not from the internal : the having a view only to prosperity in the world as an end, cannot purify the soul, and kindle there the flame of genuine charity. The works, therefore, which the Apostle depreciates as unable to convey salvation, are, either the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law, or such an obedience to its moral precepts as only looks to a selfish and worldly end. Hence he speaks of that law as being unable to purify the internal man, "in that it was weak through the flesh" [Rom. viii. 3]; meaning, that all its sanctions were of a carnal nature, looking only to the flesh or body and this world ; thus not reaching to the spirit. Well, therefore, may he speak of works, thus unconnected with a spiritual and internal principle, as being unable to secure man's salvation ;—but never does he thus speak of charity. He says that we are saved by faith (meaning thereby not the single grace so called, but the Christian Dispensation in general) without *the works of the law* : but never does he say that we are saved by faith without *charity*. On the contrary, like his Divine Master, he regards charity as including every other excellence. "Charity," he goes on, "suffereth long, and is kind : charity envieth not : charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil : rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth : beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" [Ver. 4—7]. Here is a beautiful assemblage of excellencies inherent in charity, and which must all concur in order that the grace may be genuine ! How exquisite are the touches by which it is painted !

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind :"—here is a feature by which the heavenly visitor may at once be known. One of the great distinguishing characteristics by which the love of the Lord is painted to us in Holy Writ, is, by its being long-suffering : such almost must be a necessary mark of that charity which

originates in, and thence is imitative of, the Lord's Divine Love. When, therefore, we feel that we are quick to take offence, or that we are unable to bear with the faults and infirmities of others,—that an intemperate word addressed to us kindles the flame of anger in our breasts, and that every slight or injustice that we may experience prompts us to repay in the same coin, and, as is too commonly the case, to visit the offence with interest upon the head of the offender ;—alas ! how far must we remain from being the subjects of that charity which suffereth long and is kind, and without which we cannot be in reality the Lord's disciples !

Charity, also, “envieth not, vaunteth not itself, and is not, puffed up :”—how little then are we under its sacred influence, when we grudge prosperity to others, and, swelling with an imagined sense of our own dignity and consequence, are displeased at not meeting with the homage or subserviency which we think is our due ! Charity, even, “seeketh not her own”—does not pertinaciously exact what may justly be laid claim to : much less can it be offended at not receiving that to which it is not entitled. Charity “thinketh no evil,”—is never engaged in devising injury to others : it “rejoiceth not in iniquity,”—neither taking delight in anything wicked itself, nor in hearing of, or spreading abroad, the vices of others : but “it rejoiceth in the truth.” It “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things ;” by which is not meant that it believeth all things, whether true or false, probable or improbable, and hopeth all things, whether possible or impossible : but this is an idiomatic mode of expression, denoting that charity includes in itself all faith, all hope, and all patience ; since, where charity lives in the heart, the mind assents by an inward dictate to all that faith teaches, and to all that hope or spiritual confidence promises : and is prepared to suffer all things which the hand of a merciful Father may permit to befall it.

This is but a slight sketch of some of the excellencies of the grace of charity, as here delineated by the Apostle Paul : well therefore may he conclude his eulogium by the declaration, “And now abide faith, hope, and charity, these three : but the greatest of these is charity” [Ver. 13]. How strangely is the Apostle made to contradict himself, when, in the face of this declaration,

it is imagined that he teaches the doctrine of justification by faith alone ! He expressly declares, that of the three essential Christian graces of faith, hope, and charity, charity is the greatest : how then can it be supposed that he could ever mean to say, that man is to be saved by one of these graces alone, and *that* one, not the one which he declares to be the greatest of all ? The difficulty is easily solved by admitting, that when he elsewhere speaks of man's being justified by faith without the works of the law, he means by the term faith, not faith as a specific grace distinct from charity, but the Christian dispensation in general, as distinct from the Jewish dispensation, which he here calls the law. But when he speaks of faith as a specific Christian grace distinct from charity, he gives, we see, the superiority to charity.

Such then are the views of the grace of charity, and of its supreme importance, as given by the Apostle who is commonly supposed to teach the doctrine of salvation by faith alone : and herein he both obviously and powerfully enforces, and beautifully elucidates, the doctrine of his Divine Master. But before we conclude, we must notice the manner in which the doctrine is delivered by his Divine Master himself in the words of our text.

" This is my commandment," saith our gracious Lord, " that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this ; that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Here, in making his love to us the pattern from which we are to form our ideas of what is included in his requisition that we should love one another, he sets before us an exalted standard indeed. To love one another with the same purity and devotedness of affection as glowed in his Divine bosom towards mankind, when he assumed their nature and laid down the life of it for their salvation ; or to imitate the inconceivable ardour of that Divine Love which went forth originally in the production of the universe, and which still maintains in existence, and, as far as the state and nature of the creatures will permit, in happy existence, the whole assemblage of being ;—this indeed were a thing infinitely beyond the capacities of any finite being, the utmost energy of whose love, compared to Divine Love would be

no more than a small and gross chamber fire on earth to the pure element that flames in the sun. When, therefore, the Lord requires us to love one another as he hath loved us, since he never exacts impossibilities of his creatures, his meaning is the same as when he elsewhere commands us to be perfect even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect;—not that the perfection of our love or of any other grace of which we can be the subjects, can be equal to that of the Lord,—can be the same, both in kind and degree, as his; but that it is to be as close an image of it as finite can be of infinite, or human of Divine. As man was intended from creation to be an image and likeness of God, so, to be a genuine disciple of Jesus Christ, his love for his brethren must be an image and likeness of his Lord's love to him; and so far as he feels that he is remote from this state, he must make it his constant endeavour, by avoiding in his conduct anything that would indicate the prevalence of unkind and uncharitable dispositions, to attain it.

But the particular circumstance in which the Lord presents his love to us as the pattern by which we are to model our love for each other, is, that of his laying down his life for our redemption. "Greater love," saith he, "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It seems, then, that we are to be ready to lay down our lives for our friends, should we be placed in circumstances that require it. This, however, can very seldom be the case in actual life. In defence of his country, indeed, a soldier may be called to lay down his life; and, in some cases, it may be the duty of every citizen to become a soldier, and incur the same peril: and whoever, whether soldier or citizen, acts thus from the sincere love of his country and of his fellow-citizens, doubtless performs an eminent act of charity. So, in the case of extraordinary accidents, one person may sometimes have the opportunity of saving the life of another at the risk of his own; and he who truly loves his neighbour as the Lord loveth all, will not hesitate to do so. But these being uncommon cases, cannot be what the Divine Exhorter here chiefly intends. There is a way in which every one may, and must, to be the Lord's true disciple, lay down his life for his friends. The life which the Lord laid down for man's redemption, was the in-

firm and merely human life which he inherited from the mother ; and without the laying down of this life, the divine life could not have fully descended into the human nature, and thus his Humanity could not have been glorified, or rendered itself Divine. So, that we may become truly principled in charity and mutual love, we must lay down the life of our selfish nature,—of our merely selfish inclinations and desires,—of every tendency and disposition that would lead us to regard ourselves in the first place,—to have primary respect to our own honour, dignity, importance, or interest, and to regard others only as they may be made subservient to these purpose. This is truly to lay down our lives for our friends :—spiritually considered, our friends or lovers are all the principles of love and good which can enter our minds from the Lord, and which can only have a place there, as all regard to self alone, as the primary and ruling consideration, is banished from the breast. As we thus lay down our lives for our spiritual friends, the love of our friends and brethren, naturally considered, will manifest itself in our conduct and live in our hearts. For what is the cause and source of all strife and dissension, and of all unkindness of speech and behaviour, but the life and activity of self, and self-regards? It is purely from these that we are so apt to construe the acts and words of others, towards and respecting us, in the most offensive sense that can be put on them, and to repay them with quick resentment, from a feeling of wounded dignity and self-importance. But if we would lay down our life for our friends—cultivate the principles of charity and mutual love without regard to selfish impulses, it would be impossible that offences against charity could long exist ; or, if they existed in some, they would not be kept alive and extended by others. Acts of aggression from those who are not under the influence of this holy principle, must be expected and undergone by those who are ; but, not being retorted, they would speedily come to an end. Sparks might fly, and even firebrands might be thrown ; but, not falling upon gunpowder, or any combustible matter, they would create no explosion or extended conflagration. Thus, doing what the Lord commands, by practising good, and shunning evil, we should become such as the Lord honours by calling them *his* friends ; and should continually grow in the virtues of love and charity, which bring

with them all peace, consolation, and heavenly joy : according to the concluding words of the Lord in our text, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Surely, my brethren, we must see the truly amiable and delightful nature of such a state : seeing it, then, we surely shall be ready and desirous, on every occasion, to make that sacrifice of our selfish life which is necessary to its attainment. Let us, from what has been advanced, realize in our minds a sense of the necessity, if we would be the disciples of Him whom we profess to venerate as our truly Almighty Saviour because our only God,—of ever remembering the supremacy among Christian virtues of the grace of charity, and of conforming all our inclinations and desires, our thoughts, our words, and our works, to its sacred rule. Generally speaking, we all know what love to each other must be :—knowing this, let us ever be careful to act accordingly. Let it be our constant habit, frequently to compare our actual conduct with our sense of what it would and must be, if charity were continually at its source. We all have some idea, however inadequate, since it is impossible for finite to comprehend infinite, of what the love of the Lord is to man ; our love to each other must be modelled into the faithful image of this original. It necessarily must be so, before we can enter the society of angels ; as doubtless we all hope to do when we die. There, nothing reigns but the principle of love ; and so pure and disinterested is their affection for each other, that every one loves his neighbour, not only as, but better than, himself. Think of the conduct that this would dictate : and though, while the clogs of materiality still hang upon us, it is impossible to attain to perfection like this, let us be careful not to fall below the divine standard of human excellence, but to love our neighbour truly *as* ourselves. Then, instead of the delights of self-love, which our natural infirmities incline us to esteem so highly, but which are real miseries, bringing, when attained in the highest degree, nothing but restless and painful feelings into the bosom, we shall come into the enjoyment of the delights of love to the Lord and our neighbour, which are delights indeed, having within them principles of essential happiness, and preparing the soul for happiness everlasting.

## LECTURE XXV.

ACTION FROM LOVE SUPERIOR TO ITS INDISPENSABLE PRE-  
CURSOR, ACTION FROM THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH.

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JOHN XV. 12—15.

*"This is my commandment ; That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this ; that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth : but I have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."*

IN our last Lecture, we had not time to consider the Lord's own words upon the subject of it, as recited in the text, so prominently as their importance demands, and as is due to their supreme authority ; nor even to notice the last verse of the text, as now read, at all, though most illustrative and confirmatory of the doctrine in view. To supply this deficiency I will now add a short Supplementary Discourse, in which, from the last verse, I will address you on the cognate subject which that verse suggests, and will endeavour to show,—as a branch of the doctrine, that *Charity and not Faith, is the first Essential of pure Christianity*,—that *Action from Love is superior to its indispensable Precursor, Action from the obedience of Faith*. And, meaning to be very brief, I will treat the subject more in the style of a practical Sermon than of a doctrinal Lecture.

From the former part of the words now read, it was endeavoured, in the preceding Lecture, to set forth the grand and distinguishing feature of the religion of Jesus Christ : and from these words compared with the context, and with the whole

tenor of the Divine Teacher's discourses from one end of the gospels to the other, we have been enabled clearly to discern, in the first place, the doctrine just now stated again,—That Charity, and not Faith, is the first Essential, and primary Constituent, of the Christian Religion; and, in the second place, as necessary to the right understanding of that doctrine, what the true nature of that all-important grace is. In establishing the doctrine of justification by faith alone, the framers of systems, have relied solely upon the authority of a passage or two in the writings of the Apostle Paul; though, were such truly the meaning of such passage or passages, he would contradict the whole teaching of his Divine Master, and of all his brother-apostles: accordingly, we have seen that he had no such meaning, and have shown that the true nature of Charity, its indispensable importance, and its superiority to Faith, are most powerfully taught by that very Apostle, on whose imagined authority alone the contrary doctrine has been erected. The genuine doctrine upon this subject of the Apostle Paul, is, "And now abide faith, hope, and charity;—but the greatest of these is charity" [1 Cor. xiii. 13]: as the plain doctrine of Jesus Christ is, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" [John xiii. 35]. Or, as in the first three verses of the text, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." This is eminently *his* commandment,—the peculiar characteristic of his religion: and how beautiful, how truly divine a characteristic it is! His disciples are to love one another with a love imitative of that which the Lord displayed for us, in assuming our nature and working out, through direful conflicts and sufferings, our redemption, even to the extent of laying down his life for our sakes. We also are to lay down our life for our friends; by which, we have seen in our last, is properly and spiritually meant, the life of our self-love—of all the corruptions and perversions of our nature,—of all that tends to fix our regards upon ourselves, our own influence, and interest, and to disregard the welfare and the feelings of others. This life we are to lay down for our friends;—that



is, spiritually understood,—in order that the genuine principles of charity and love, signified by friends, may take up their residence in our bosoms; for just in proportion as self-love and the love of the world are banished thence, can the love of the Lord and of our neighbour enter, and assume the supremacy.

What a heaven should we behold on earth, were such to become indeed, the character and state of all who profess to be the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to assume, from that circumstance, the name of Christians! How happy would that society of Christians be, where such a love possessed the breasts of all! How necessary for those to strive to attain such a state, and to avoid every thing in their conduct which could indicate the absence of it, who profess to believe that love is, of a truth, the first essential of the Christian religion; and who believe that the Lord is making his second advent, when the reception of this blessed principle, in conjunction with the acknowledgment of Him as the only God of heaven and earth, is once more, and more conspicuously than ever, to be the distinguishing mark of those who receive him!

But is it possible that such an exalted state of heavenly love and life can be instantaneously implanted, and brought to maturity, in the breast of every one who becomes a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, and acknowledges him as his only God and Saviour? Is it possible that Action from Love can constitute the characteristic of his conduct at once? Can in a moment all the evil tendencies which lurk in the human heart—that love of self and love of the world which are now by birth the inheritance of all the human species—be ejected; and such love to the Lord and our neighbour be implanted in their stead? As *ends* doubtless, this latter change is possible; and must be the case. So long as the love of self and the love of the world reign with a person as the ends of his life, his pursuits and actions, he is no disciple of the Lord, or subject of his kingdom, at all: and they cannot cease to reign as ends, without their opposites, the love of the Lord and of the neighbour, assuming the supremacy in their place. But still they will continue for a long time to exert an influence on the mind, and will occasionally struggle hard to regain their do-

minion; and so long, the love of the Lord and our neighbour, though existing within, will not be so manifestly felt in the fulness of their beneficent, soothing, and delightful influence. The man, indeed, must, and will act in obedience to what he knows to be their requirements; he will shun evils as sins against God; and thus shunning evils, he will avoid doing what is inconsistent with the love of his neighbour. But he will for a time, act thus from a sense of duty,—because he knows that the Lord requires it, and that without obedience to his commandments he cannot be a disciple of his, or a subject of his kingdom: thus he will act from the Obedience of Faith in these things: but, for a time, he will not be so consciously sensible of a love for the good which he thus is led to do, accompanied, as all conscious love is, when its objects are gratified, with a sense of delight and enjoyment. This will succeed, in proportion as, by continually fighting against evils, the life of the selfhood is extinguished; as, according to what we have seen in our last, we are required to do: but this is never accomplished at once, but only by degrees: and till it is in some good measure accomplished, such a love of goodness, and thus of our neighbour, as the Lord requires, and as we are unceasingly to aim at, cannot be shed abroad in all its conscious fulness in the breast. By birth, or by natural disposition alone, we are not principled in the love of our neighbour: we all have, indeed, some naturally good dispositions, and are capable of loving those with whom we are connected by relationship and by consociation from early years: but still, the love of self and of the world being naturally predominant, we are strangers, as to natural disposition alone, to the genuine love of the Lord and our neighbour. Now every one knows that he cannot change his love by a mere thought or effort of the mind, so as immediately to love something which he did not love before. Love always enters and grows, as it were, spontaneously, and cannot be received, changed, or put off, by a thought, or even by a wish. But the love of self and the world are removed from the mind by the Lord, in proportion as man, from a conviction of their evil nature, strives to avoid cherishing the thoughts and inclinations which they suggest to him, and abstains, in practice, from the evils to which

they would prompt him : and as man does this, the Lord infuses the opposite affections into his soul, of the love of Him and of his neighbour. While in this preparatory state, he acts from the Obedience of Faith.

This order, then, by which man proceeds to the full attainment of that principle of charity, of that mutual love, or love of his brethren, which the Lord propounds as his great commandment, is what is alluded to in the concluding verse of our text ; when He says to the disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth : but I have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Throughout the Word of God, when the term "servant" is made use of, it is employed in relation to the principle of truth, and to those who receive it, and act under its influence ; thus, also, to the principle of faith, which is belief of the truth : and frequently it is used in contradistinction to those who act more immediately from a principle of goodness or of love. A servant—especially such servants as are commonly spoken of in Scripture, who, agreeably to the custom universally prevalent in ancient times, were what we now call slaves, being actually the property of those whom they served :—such a servant, particularly, is not his own master, but is bound to act continually according to the commands of another, without even having the privilege, which servants in modern times and in Christian countries possess, of changing his master, or, if he sees the opportunity of gaining an independent livelihood, of withdrawing from servitude altogether. Such a servant, then, is a most apt representative of those persons, who, in their religious pursuits and practice, act under the influence of a principle of truth received in the understanding,—or which they believe, and to which they yield obedience,—without having a full sense of such a love for the duties which they are taught to practise, as would prompt their performance with perfect readiness and delight :—thus they represent such persons as live in the practice of the duties of charity, because they know that such is the will and commandment of the Lord, and that his truth requires it, without a full conscious feeling of that love or charity itself which would spontaneously flow into

the practice of such duties. Thus they act, as it were, from another, and not from a consciously free principle in their own minds. It is true that they still do act from a free principle, since the motive that determines them to action is within themselves, and they could act otherwise if they pleased : still the motive is altogether in their internal man, and their external, not being yet brought so under its influence as to love the same things, acts with a sense of compulsion or constraint. Truly, as the Lord here says, "the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth,"—is not conscious of the design from which he is required to act, or of the secret counsels and motives which are active in the interiors of the mind by which its actions are controlled. Thus, also, although in such a state man acts from the dictate of the truth which he acknowledges, there still is not that inward perception even of the truth, which is imparted when the obstructions in the external man are removed, and man is brought to act, fully and consciously, under the influence of love. He believes the truth without having a clear intuition of it : and he acts from the Obedience of such Faith.

But when the Lord thus says to his disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants," it obviously implies, that, previously, they had been in the state, of which a servant is the symbol ; although, at the time when he was speaking, they were passing into the higher state of friends. It is, however, plain enough from their history, that the Lord's disciples in the world did not enter into this second state till after his resurrection,—indeed, not fully till the day of Pentecost ; for notwithstanding the plainness of his latter instructions, it is evident that, till then, they remained in great obscurity as to his meaning : but as the second state had now commenced, and the Lord knew that it would speedily be fully developed, he here speaks as if it were accomplished, and converses with them accordingly. Therefore, to his statement, "Henceforth I call you not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth," he adds the consoling remark, "but I have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." By the Lord's friends, or lovers, are obviously meant such persons as do not, like those who are called servants, act from a

mere motive of duty, or dictate of truth,—from obedience to faith,—but whose conduct is immediately influenced by the love of the good which they are called upon to do,—thus who truly are lovers of the Lord, and thence also of their neighbour. When a man attains this state, he acts from freedom itself. There is no longer anything like irksomeness to him in obedience to any of the commandments of his Saviour God. All those commandments require nothing but what a real love of goodness spontaneously prompts to: all, therefore, who have attained this love, or in whose minds it reigns without being intercepted in its descent by a yet unregenerate state of their external man, will keep all the divine commandments, without feeling, in doing so, anything like restraint. They see, in every practical truth with which they become acquainted, nothing but a help towards living with greater fulness in the delight of their life, by bringing more completely into activity that love in which their very life consists: thus, most eminently is it their experience, in the words of the Lord's beloved disciple, who so well knew, from his own pre-eminent attainments in love, what are the feelings it brings with it, that "his commandments are not grievous" [1 John, v. 3]. Friends or lovers of the Lord, they must love all that which the Lord essentially is, which is, goodness and truth: they must love, therefore, all those in whom goodness and truth from the Lord are—thus they must love one another: they must desire to see goodness and truth universally reigning in the human breast; and therefore they must love all mankind.

They, also, who are in this state, though they no longer take their leading character from the principle of truth, but from that of goodness; will, in consequence of having their internal man opened, and thus being in the enjoyment of light from heaven, be in the perception of truth more than others: whence the Lord here says, of the disciples as his friends, "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." We are not to suppose from this, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as a separate and subordinate person, had revelations made to him audibly from the Father, as another and superior Deity: the true idea intended is, as was abundantly shown in the Lectures

on the Lord's Mediation, &c., that the Divine Humanity of the Lord, receiving into itself all the fulness of the Essential Divinity, is the medium of conveying to those who, through love and obedience, are in states to receive them, those perceptions of divine wisdom by which their minds are enlightened, and by which they form just conceptions of the nature and person of their God and Saviour, and of the way in which they are to walk, to bring into corresponding operation that spirit of love which they have received from Him. This attribute of the Lord's Divine Humanity, as receiving in itself the fulness of the Essential Divinity, and dispensing divine gifts and perceptions to man, is what is described, in terms taken from the ordinary use of natural language, by His saying, "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." The application will be equally just, if we consider the Lord as here speaking in his character of the Divine Truth: for Divine Truth, signified in Scripture by the Son, derives all that it has from the Divine Good, signified by the Father, and is the source of all the perceptions of truth communicated to mankind. From the inmost Divinity itself, man can immediately receive nothing: the Divine Humanity, and the Divine Truth which is one therewith, is the only medium by which the communications of Divine Love can reach mankind: and because man had fallen so low that even the Divine Truth, as it existed before the incarnation, had become ineffectual for that purpose, the Lord assumed the human nature actually; that thus, operating upon the natural man from the corresponding principle rendered Divine in himself, the streams of saving mercy might flow anew into his soul. All this is included in the gracious declaration, "All things that I have heard of my Father, have I made known unto you."

From what has been advanced we see for our encouragement, that though we cannot be fully the Lord's disciples but by loving one another as he hath loved us; nor at all, except as we look towards this state and earnestly strive to make it our own; yet we are not to be disheartened when we feel that we have not yet realized the blessed distinction. Before we can fully be the Lord's friends, we must, on first passing from a merely

natural state towards a spiritual one, be his servants. Action from the Obedience of Faith is the indispensable Precursor of its superior, Action from Love. But let us not imagine that, even in this prior state, we can ever neglect with impunity the duties of charity, in their practical results. We are not even the Lord's servants unless we truly do serve him; and we cannot serve him but by keeping, sincerely, his commandments; otherwise, our faith is indeed alone, and productive of no benefit to the soul. We must ever keep in our minds the idea of what charity and mutual love really are, and what is the conduct which manifests their existence. We cannot thus contemplate them, and at the same time avoid in thought and in practice whatever is inconsistent with them, without finding, first, the admiration, and then, the love of them, springing up within our hearts. Let us most earnestly strive to encourage their growth. Let us look continually to the Lord, who alone can remove the principle of evil love from the bosom, and implant in its place the love of good: but let us at the same time be careful to shun all evils as sins, and so to act as we see we should act if truly under the influence of living charity. So shall we attain the higher state which involves Action from Love. So, also, shall we know what it is to be of the number of those whom the Lord condescends to call his friends,—and we shall be replenished, by his Divine Truth, with all the heavenly blessings of which his Divine Love is the exhaustless Origin and Source.

## LECTURE XXVI.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF A SINNER BEFORE GOD.

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MATT. xii. 35—37.

*“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”*

I HAVE had occasion repeatedly to observe on former opportunities, that the views which I am endeavouring to set before you in these Lectures, as the doctrines of the True Christian Religion, bear, at least, this very usual mark of truth:—that they come between the extremes into which opposite denominations of professing Christians have run in forming their respective systems. I have also had occasion to remark, that the views of Christianity which I have been under the necessity of opposing, so far from being those of Christianity itself,—so far from being parts of the faith once delivered to the saints, and for which we are exhorted by the Apostle to contend, are notions which were introduced long after the age of the Apostles, which put on their worst form among the corruptions of the Romish domination and during the ignorance of the dark ages; and some of which were actually unknown in the church till the period of the Reformation from Popery, and owed their birth and introduction to Luther, Calvin, and the other leaders of that great, and, notwithstanding, eminently beneficial event.

Both these observations are exemplified in the doctrine which is to form the subject of our Lecture of this evening; which is



to be, *the Justification of the Sinner before God*. We have, indeed, anticipated much belonging to this subject in our last two or three Lectures: yet not to deliver a Lecture expressly upon it, in a Series on the most important doctrines of the Christian Religion, might be deemed an unpardonable omission. I trust therefore, to be excused, should I, in endeavouring to meet a general expectation, repeat again, a few things that have been incidentally stated before.

To a human being, existing in the state in which we behold human beings in general on this earth, no subject more important can easily be conceived, than that of the Justification of the sinner before God. As human beings, we are immortal; yet as inhabitants of this world we are mortal, and must soon take our departure hence to meet our final doom in eternity. But, at the same time (what few can be so blinded by self-love and self-conceit as not to acknowledge), we are sinners: we feel tendencies to evil, however we came by them, inherent in our nature, and we all, to a greater or less extent, have shocked the eyes of Infinite Holiness and Purity by the indulgence of evil affections and thoughts, and the practice of evil deeds. And we all are to "appear," in the language of the Apostle, "before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive for the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" [2 Cor. v. 10]. How then can beings, such as we know ourselves to be, appear there with safety? How can the stains with which we are defiled be washed away? How is a sinner to obtain Justification before God?

To supply the means by which this all-necessary attainment might be secured, was the design of the appearance on earth of the Lord Jesus Christ, or of the assumption of Humanity by the great Jehovah: and to make known to man what these means are, is the object of the instructions of the whole Word of God. Most important, then, is it, to every individual of the human race who lives where that Word exists and sheds its light, rightly, to be informed what its instructions in regard to this momentous subject are,—to know what is the true doctrine of Justification.

Justification, say all the prevailing Protestant Churches, is by

Faith only. The maintaining of the doctrine of Justification by Faith only, says the great Reformer, Luther, is "the article of a standing or falling Church;" a statement which is repeated by a living Author, a Clergyman of the Church of England, of whom we shall presently speak further, and who confirms the declaration of Luther by his own suffrage, that it is "the very heart and core of our common Christianity." Yet strange to say, this asserted criterion of a standing or falling Church,—this heart and core of the common Christianity,—is one of those doctrines, and in fact, the chief of them, which, as we have just noticed, never were known in the church till the days of what is called the Reformation. If it had been crudely broached by the earlier Reformer, Wickliffe, it was dressed up in the form which it has ever since retained, and made the very first doctrine of the Christian Religion, by Luther and his fellow-labourers;—thus, not till the sixteenth century of the Christian era.

Do not imagine, my friends and brethren, that I am going to decry the labours, and to depreciate the merits, of Luther and his colleagues. It is most true that we owe to them an immense debt of gratitude. But for them, and especially, for Luther who, after the days of Wickliffe, first led the van, and whose indomitable fortitude alone was adequate to the making of any effectual stand against the then universally established power of Rome, we should have been groaning, in all probability, in the spiritual slavery of the Romish Church, and groping in its unmitigated darkness, at the present day: and I doubt not that he is enjoying, at this moment, in heaven, the reward, not of his faith only, but of his many illustrious and truly beneficent deeds of charity. Numerous are the corruptions and abuses which he cleared away; and as it is owing, very greatly, to his efforts, that the Word of God was brought forth from its obscurity, and made accessible to all, we are in part indebted to him, as an instrument in the hands of Providence, for all the light which, from that Divine Source, is now diffusing its rays over the world. But his desire to make an impassable line of distinction between his disciples and those of the Church of Rome, caused him to go, in one respect, too far. He might, indeed, have made a line of distinction broad enough, without

transgressing the line of truth, by reforming a greater error of the Romish Church than any that he meddled with. He might have removed the desolating doctrine of a trinity of separate Divine Persons, which lies at the root of all the errors which have deluged the Christian Church,—not, as some have done, by rejecting a trinity altogether, or by denying the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, without the acknowledgment of which there can be no Church at all,—but by acknowledging the Person or Jesus Christ to be the Manifestation and Form of the Father, or the Divine Essence, and the Holy Spirit to be the Divine influences and operations thence proceeding; thus acknowledging a trinity of Essentials of Deity in one person, instead of a trinity of actual separate Deities in three. But, doubtless, the fulness of time for the re-discovery of this Grand Truth, which is truly the article of a standing or a falling Church, was not then come. Yet Luther had more just and more exalted views of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ than any of the other leading Reformers. He acknowledged him to be Divine even as to his Humanity, and taught the momentous and majestic truth, that in Him, God is Man and Man is God; a grand and glorious avowal, which will ever command for him the respect of those who embrace the sentiments which I have humbly endeavored to advocate in these Lectures as the doctrines of the True Christian Religion. But the same degree of divine illumination did not guide him, when, in evil hour for the cause of genuine Religion he declared that man is justified by faith only,—by faith and nothing else; and set up this as the standard under which his followers were to combat with the Romanists. Strange to say, herein all the other Protestant leaders were content to follow him: and thus has been established, through all Protestant Christendom, a most erroneous tenet as the very heart and core of the whole Christian Religion.

As alluded to in our last Lectures, the foundation upon which Luther and the Protestant leaders have built this doctrine, is, in reality, only one passage of Paul, where he says, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law” [Rom. iii. 28]. But the Apostle does not here say that man is justified by faith *only*: nor by the term “faith”

does he here mean the individual grace so named. As observed in our last or last but one, this Apostle often uses the term "faith" to signify the Christian religion in general, as he often uses the term "the law" for the Jewish religion in general. These are what he means by the two terms here, which thus are placed in exact contrast, as the Apostle evidently intends. Whenever he speaks of faith as an individual Christian grace and does not mean by it the Christian religion in general, he is far enough from ascribing to it the whole power of justification. "Though," as we have before quoted, he says, "I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" [1 Cor. xiii. 2]. Is this the language of a person who meant to teach, that man is justified by faith alone? Charity, we see, is the grace, according to this enlightened teacher, upon which the whole efficacy of faith depends: is this like teaching that Justification is by faith alone? But his language becomes still more decided: "And now," saith he, to conclude the subject, "abideth faith, hope (or confidence), and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity" [Ib. ver. 13]. In this Apostle's estimation, the individual grace of charity is greater than the individual grace of faith; can it be imagined, then, that he ever thought of teaching, that man is to be justified by the single grace of faith, and nothing else?

But the Apostle Paul was a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ: does then his Divine Master ever ascribe the Justification of man to faith alone? *He* uses the expression, in application to the Justification of the sinner, but twice. Once is in the parable of the Pharisee and Publican; in which, after the Pharisee had made his boasting and self-righteous address to the Deity, the Publican is described as standing afar off; when, not daring to lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, he only smote his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner:" upon which the Divine Speaker says, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other" [Luke xviii. 13, 14]: where his Justification is obviously ascribed to his deep humility, his profound sense of his own unworthiness, and his consequent sincere repentance.

The other place in which the Lord himself speaks of man's

Justification, is in our text; where He says, "For by thy words thou shalt be *justified*, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." But what are the words which have this justifying efficacy? for how can Justification depend upon *mere* words? The preceding verses explain, that the words spoken of are those which proceed out of the treasure or storehouse of a good man's heart; and thus that it is *goodness in the heart*, which is the same thing as charity, to which inmosty belongs the power of justifying: as, also, the words which condemn are those which proceed from an *evil heart*, in which, therefore, inmosty lies the cause of condemnation.—"O, generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" [Matt. xii. 34—37]. An idle word, in Scripture language, is not merely a light or trifling word, but a word which proceeds from an evil heart or intention, and which involves a false and uncharitable judgment; as a further inspection of the context would show. Everything is called *idle* or *vain*, in Scripture, which includes no principle of good. Words then, (in which term are included thoughts,) are only mentioned as affording the criteria for justification or condemnation, so far as they are indexes of good or evil in the heart. "*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*;" and it is those words only that flow directly from the fulness of the heart, which are here spoken of as determining the lot, because they indicate the character, of the man: and to words, with the thoughts which they express, proceeding from a good heart, thus to the good heart itself, primarily and essentially,—is ascribed, by Infallibility, the power of Justification.

This illustrates the case before noticed, of the justified publican. He simply uttered the words, "God be merciful to me a sinner:" but as the Divine Eye saw that these few words proceeded from a corresponding affection and emotion of the

heart,—were a real index of sincere repentance—of a will turned from evil to good,—Omniscience, in union with Infinite Goodness, which are the first of the Divine attributes, pronounces upon the humble suppliant the sentence of Justification.

These examples and declarations appear amply sufficient to evince how greatly Luther erred, when he laid down, as the distinguishing tenet of the Protestant Creed, that man's Justification is by Faith alone: indeed, great and good a man as Luther was, his writings but too plainly evince the folly of taking him as an infallible guide; for many indeed are the crudities and weaknesses that they display. The system of doctrines, therefore, which I have feebly endeavoured to elucidate in these Lectures, as those of the True Christian Religion, makes an important addition to the common doctrine, derived from Luther, on the subject. This system, we have seen, maintains, not that man is justified by faith alone, but by faith, charity, and good works, in union. Faith, without charity to animate it, as the Apostle Paul declares, is nothing [1 Cor. xiii. 2], and, as the Apostle James testifies, is dead [Ep. ii. 17]. Charity, without faith to direct it aright, is spurious: and good works not proceeding from charity and faith as their moving cause, are empty husks, good only in outward appearance.

On the important subject, then, of Justification, the doctrines which we receive as those of the True Christian Religion take a middle path between the extreme introduced by Luther, and the opposite extreme which had previously been gone into by the Church of Rome. Because Rome had ascribed the power of Justification to merely dead works, such as fastings and penances and pecuniary mulcts, Luther rejected works altogether, and the charity also which should be the soul both of faith and works. Since, however, the Reformation has made them more cautious, the Romanists have expressed themselves much more justly on this head; and candour must allow, that they have, on this point, greatly the advantage over their Protestant adversaries.

Within these twenty years past, many public discussions have been held between Roman Catholics and Protestants, upon the chief points of their respective creeds: a Society has been

formed, called the Reformation Society, for the express purpose of carrying on the controversy, and of maintaining the doctrines introduced at the Reformation in all their rigour; and great is the interest which has been excited. Such discussions may ultimately do good; not by converting Protestants into Catholics or Catholics into Protestants, though in both these ways some consequences have resulted; but by opening the eyes of the candid and considerate in both denominations, to the extent to which both parties have departed from the doctrines of the Word of God. On the subjects of the withholding, by the Catholics, of the Word of God from the people, of their prayers in an unknown tongue, of their worship of saints and images, of their prayers and masses for the dead, of their indulgences, their purgatory, and their many other superstitious practices and persuasions, the Protestants have an immense superiority, and the Catholics have nothing to offer in their defence but paltry quibbles and evasions. But upon what the Protestants themselves call the grand point of the controversy,—the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone,—the Catholics have greatly the advantage. I remember a meeting of this kind, at the Freemason's Hall, London, at which, as on many other occasions, this was fully evinced. Each party is strong, just so far as they have the Word of God for their guide; but where they depart from the Word of God, (as Luther, in a passage of his writings which the Romish disputants do not fail to bring forward, acknowledges that he did [as may be seen in the *note* at the end of this Lecture] in excluding good works from all share in man's Justification,) then the greatest human abilities become weak as water. According to the sublime symbol in the Revelation, it is the characteristic of the Divine Truth of the Word of God, when justly seen and applied, to destroy opposing false conceptions with an irresistible force—"he that overcometh," it is said, "shall rule the nations with a rod of iron,—as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken in pieces" [Rev. ii. 26, 27]. A rod of iron is the constant emblem, in Scripture, of power exerted by means of the plain truth, such as lies obvious in the letter of the Word of God; and the vessels of the potter are, in like manner, constant emblems of the vain

fictions and imaginations of men. Hence the same images are applied in the Psalms to the redeeming works of the Lord Himself as to his Humanity,—that is, of the Word made flesh: of whom it is said, in reference to his combats with the infernal powers, and the false persuasions and suggestions with which they carried on the conflict, “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” [Ps. ii. 9].

But we will examine the doctrine a little more particularly, with the arguments both of Roman Catholics and Protestants for their respective views.

In order to account for the effect ascribed to faith alone in producing man’s justification, when, it is obvious, faith, by itself, cannot make a person either just or good, it is affirmed by the prevailing doctrines in Protestant countries, that, by the exercise of this faith, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ himself is imputed to the sinner, and reckoned as the actual cause of his justification, just as if it really were his own. But as I prefer, when convenient, to mention the strange sentiments contained in generally received doctrines rather in the words of their advocates, than in my own, I will state some of the particulars of this doctrine, and of the arguments in support of it, as they are given in a sermon on the subject, preached and published with an express view to the conversion of Roman Catholics, by the Rev. Mr. Bickersteth, an eminent clergyman of what is called the Evangelical party in the Church of England, and one of the champions of the Reformation Society. In my remarks, also, upon the same, I shall avail myself of some observations in an able critique upon it in a periodical work.

The first point necessary to be ascertained, is, the meaning of the words, “justify,” and “justification.”

The verb “to justify,” according to its form in English, would signify, from etymology, to *make* or *render just*: and the same would be its etymological signification in the original language of the New Testament. This is an argument insisted on by the Roman Catholics. However, its more usual acceptance certainly is, to *account* or *reckon just*. It is therefore argued, for the common Protestant doctrine, that to *justify*, in



the New Testament, signifies to *account* as just, or righteous, whether the individual so esteemed be *really* just or not. But it is to be observed, that many words of this sort have a two-fold acceptation, according as they are applied to man or to God. Thus when man is said to *magnify* God, it is not meant that *man makes* God great, but that he makes him great in the *view of others*, by *declaring*, or acknowledging, his greatness. But when God is said to magnify a man, as is declared of Joshua [ch. iv. 14], it means that he *really* makes him great. The case is the same in regard to the words "glorify," "sanctify," and "justify."

The word "justify" undoubtedly means, in its judicial sense, to *account* or *pronounce just*; and *that*, whether the judge be human or Divine. Human judges are commanded in Scripture [Deut. xxv. 1], "to justify the righteous and condemn the wicked." To be able to do this, they must first examine the case by external evidence, since man can obtain no other, and thence pronounce their judgment. But the Divine Judge scrutinizes the heart of man, ere he declares him guilty or innocent. He ascertains whether or not a real righteousness is present there, of which He himself has been the Author; since nothing good can come from any other source. If this be wanting, the man cannot be pronounced just by God, who sees all things as they really are. How then can the partial sense of the word "justify" be taken when applied to the Divine Judge, and its meaning confined to the *pronouncing* of a favorable judgment, whether truly or not? when, in the case of God, such judgment cannot be erroneous, and can only be pronounced, where righteousness has previously been implanted by Him.

The Scripture use of the term will appear most unquestionable from a few quotations; from which it will be seen, that God, in his character of a Judge, *justifies* or *pronounces just*, the man whom, in his character of a Saviour from sin, he has previously *justified*, or *made just*. Thus we read in Isaiah [liii. 11], "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many:" where, by *justifying* them, is obviously signified, *making* them *just*.

But, as is declared in Exod. [xxiii. 7], he "will not justify the wicked;" plainly assuring us, that he will not *account* them just who really are wicked. Yet the Apostle declares [Rom. iv. 5], that he "justifieth the ungodly;" which can mean nothing else, in harmony with the other statement, than that he will *make* the ungodly righteous, and will then *account* them as such, on their turning to him, and believing in him.

Between the act of a human judge then, and of the Divine Judge, in justifying the righteous, or pronouncing them to be such, there exists a most perfect analogy. The human judge pronounces him to be just whom he *believes* to be so; that is, whose conduct he believes to be conformable to the laws. The Omniscient Judge pronounces him to be just whom he *knows* to be so: that is, whose heart and conduct he perceives to be conformable to his Word. Most clearly is the doctrine stated by the beloved disciple John: "Little children," saith he, "let no man deceive you: he that *doeth* righteousness, is righteous; (or, is he that is righteous)" [1 Ep. iii. 7]; in which caution against being deceived, he might be thought to have in his eye the doctrine of the present day, when it teaches, that in order to a man's being justified, or *accounted* righteous, his really *being* righteous, or "*doing* righteousness," is not at all necessary. It is also to be remembered, that the word which is translated "righteous," is always the same, throughout the Scriptures, as that which is translated "just:" when therefore this Apostle says, as translated, "he that doeth righteousness, is *righteous*," he equally says, he that doeth righteousness is *just*; and to say that he is just, really, is the same as to say, that he is justified, or *accounted just*, by God: and no one, as already noticed, can either be *really* just, or be *accounted just by God*, but one whose righteousness is *derived from God*, or whom he has *made* so.

From the whole of these observations on the meaning of the word, we see how utterly weak is the argument, that because the term "justify," when applied to a human judge, will not bear the sense of *making* just, but only of *pronouncing* just, it must be taken in the same confined sense when applied to God;

though, in respect to Him, it is true in both senses, and he neither will, nor can, *pronounce* any as just, but those whom he first has *made* just.

It will be perfectly evident, on a little examination, that the Apostle Paul himself, on whom, to the exclusion of all the other writers of the New Testament, the maintainers of Justification by Faith Only, rely for the support of their doctrine, speaks of man's being justified precisely in the sense in which we have just explained the word—as denoting both the *making* just, and the *accounting* just; and only the *accounting* of those to be just who really *are* just. Thus he says to the Corinthians [1 Ep. vi. 11], “Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” So to the Romans [ch. viii. 33] he says, “Whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Can any one doubt for a moment, that when he here speaks of being washed, sanctified, justified, and glorified, he means, *made* clean, *made* holy, *made* just, and *made* glorious? More especially, must not this certainly be his meaning in respect to the three former terms,—“washed,” “sanctified,” “justified,”—when he describes the operations they express as being effected by the Spirit of God,—or as being what he elsewhere calls “the work of the Spirit?” The work of the Spirit doubtless consists in *making* man clean, holy, and just or righteous; not in causing him to be *reckoned* such without being such in reality.

It is also to be observed, that, incompatibly with the common Protestant doctrine, the Apostle here places justification *after* sanctification. This evidently proves, that justification does not go *before* sanctification, but, at the most, that it only accompanies it with equal steps: the fact being, that man is neither *made* just, nor *accounted* just, but precisely so far as he is made holy. Whereas the common Protestant doctrine describes him as being accounted just, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, through faith, in a moment, before his sanctification, or becoming holy, has so much as commenced; this, if it ever takes place at all, being to come afterwards.

Such is the Protestant doctrine of the Justification of the sinner before God, as contrasted with the doctrines on the subject

of the Scriptures themselves. And this doctrine, as before remarked, *was* never established in the Church till the time of Luther. It is a fact that, upon this subject, the doctrines of the Roman Catholics are far more agreeable to the Word of God.

For the Roman Catholic doctrine we cannot easily have a higher authority than that of Bossuet, the celebrated Bishop of Meaux; and he affirms, that "the righteousness of Jesus Christ is not only *imputed*, but is actually *communicated* to his faithful, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; so that they are not merely *reputed*, but are really *made* just by his grace."

The authorized Roman Catholic Testament has this note upon the passage in Paul about our being justified by faith without the works of the law: "The faith," it says, "to which the Apostle here attributes man's justification, is not a presumptuous assurance of our being justified, but a firm and lively belief of all that God has revealed or promised (Heb. xi); a faith working through love (Gal. v. 16); in short a faith which takes in hope, love, repentance, and the use of the sacraments: and the works which he here excludes are only the works of the law, that is, the works of the law of nature, or that of Moses antecedent to the faith of Christ; but by no means such as follow faith and proceed from it." Surely, it is not easy much to improve this explanation. The faith here described, "which takes in hope, love, and repentance," is not, as was remarked in the former part of this Lecture, the single and separate grace of faith, but is a short and comprehensive term for the whole of the Christian Religion.

But the most authentic declaration of the present doctrines of the Roman Catholics, is that contained in the decisions of the Council of Trent, their great standard of doctrine: and the decree of that council upon the subject of Justification is to this effect: "Justification itself is not only a remission of sins, but sanctification and reformation of the inner man by a voluntary reception of grace, and of the gifts which accompany it; whereby a man from unjust is made just, and from an enemy a friend, that he may be made an heir of everlasting life." Assuredly, had the Council of Trent never decreed anything worse than this, the separation of the Protestants from the Church of Rome

need not have taken place : As it was, there was ample reason for that great measure, and we can never be too thankful that it was accomplished. But the leaders of the Reformation took completely wrong ground, when they made their grand point of distinction the doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone.

Mr. Bickersteth, to whom we are obliged for these extracts from the Roman Catholic authorities, observes upon them thus : "Here then is the doctrine of the Romish Church : they assert that sanctification is a part of our justification. On this point, the Protestant Church is wholly at issue with them ; and against this doctrine, we, at this time, solemnly renew our protest ; because we conceive it to be directly contrary to multiplied express testimonies, and to laboured and lengthened statements, of the Word of God, and destructive of true faith and godliness." As he states, the Romanists, on the other hand, object, that the doctrine of Justification by Faith *Only*, "tends to loosen the obligations of morality, and to weaken the restraints of iniquity." And this Reformation-Society's Champion allows, that "at first sight, and to the natural man, the doctrine may have this appearance." Is not this something like a fatal admission ? For are not all men natural before they are spiritual ? All men, therefore, at the most momentous part of their Christian course,—the commencement,—are liable to be so operated upon by what is called the doctrine of Justification, as that it will appear to them to have a tendency to anything but sanctification. Is not this a lamentable consequence of separating sanctification from Justification ? Does not such a separation appear to be more "directly destructive of true faith and godliness" than can possibly be the result of combining them together ?

But the manner in which it is customary to represent Justification, independently of sanctification, as being so necessary, is, by ascribing to man an utter inability to keep the law of God, and by representing the law as demanding eternal damnation as the penalty of the smallest breach of it, whether the transgressor afterwards become penitent, and repent of his transgressions, or not. Thus the Author we have referred to demands, "How can sinful man be just with the Holy God ? He will by no means acquit the guilty ; his law is holy, just, and good : it de-

clares, 'the soul that sinneth it shall die.' 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.' A law," he adds, "necessarily requires perfect conformity to it, in order to our being justified by it: a *single* failure forfeits the blessing, and incurs the curse. But we have sinned; we are therefore under sentence of the death and curse of the law. The wrath of Almighty God is impending over us: How shall we escape?"

Really, it is surprising how men can read the Word of God, and yet give such representations of the nature of the law of God and of its Divine Author. To this terrific description by the champion of the principles of the Reformation, and to his demand, "how shall we escape?"—we may calmly answer, in the words of the Apostle Peter, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" [Acts iii. 19]. Or in the parallel words, under the law itself, of Jehovah by Ezekiel; a part of which, without this sequel (by keeping which out of sight, and quoting the commencement to establish an opposite doctrine, the remainder is falsified), is introduced into the dreadful description just recited of the demands of the law. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right,—he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins which he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him" [Ch. xxxiii. 14, 15, 16]. If then we may escape from the consequences of sin by true repentance—by a change of mind and life,—is it not going much too far to say, that "a single failure forfeits the blessing and incurs the curse,"—brings us under the *irrevocable* sentence of death? In this case, as all have sinned, hardened sinners and penitent ones are in precisely the same situation, and the one, as to his eternal prospects, is no better nor worse than the other. It is indeed true, that while man is *in* sin, he is in a state of spiritual death;—he is under the curse; which, in the language of Scripture, means, in a state averted from the Source of blessing; his sin separates between him and his God. But let him turn from his sin, and he at the same time turns from the curse; and his repentance occasions joy, even in heaven: for the angels know that repentance is *not* ineffectual.

Behold a plain, and true, and Scriptural doctrine of Justification. It is a deplorable perversion of Scripture to affirm, that in order to man's Justification through obedience to the law of God (performed from the motives suggested by faith), perfect, that is, undeviating conformity to the divine law, from the beginning to the end of life, is indispensable,—that all is lost, if one transgression be incurred. Were this the case, repentance, so often mentioned in Scripture, were a vain and empty word, and the repeated calls to it were unfeeling mockery : whereas, even the law itself makes provision for the restoration of the sinner on his repentance.

Our Protestant Advocate, however, assuming all that he has said about the demands of the law to be unanswerable, makes the sinner exclaim, "I am in this tremendous condition : I am under the load of guilt : I am impotent to fulfil even present duty : O, how can I be justified ?" But where is the sinner taught that he is impotent to fulfil even present duty ? Have not the glad tidings yet reached his ears, that, as the Evangelist assures us [John i. 12], *power* to become "sons of God," is given by the Lord Jesus Christ "to as many as receive him ?"—that as Jesus Christ declares himself, the Holy Spirit is given to them that ask for it [Luke xi. 13] ?—that the Lord's yoke is easy [Matt. xi. 30] ? and that his commandments are not grievous [1 John v. 3] ? Let the sinner, according to the direction of the Apostle Peter, "purify his soul in *obeying* the truth, through the spirit," and he will attain "unto unfeigned love," "being born again, of incorruptible seed by the Word of God" [1 Ep. i. 22, 23], and then he will find, according to the declaration of Paul, that Jesus Christ is "the Author of eternal salvation to all them that *obey* him" [Heb. v. 9]. The Apostle Paul, also, speaks clearly [Rom. vi. 16] of "obedience unto righteousness." He that attains righteousness, or justice, is justified ; and if by Christian obedience, then by Christian works.

But our champion for Justification by Faith Only instructs us, that, to sinners, the righteousness of Christ is reckoned theirs, through faith in him ; and that those who believe the testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ are justified ; their faith also

being the gift of God. He informs us, that the very term "impute" (*reckon* or *account*) might guard us against the *error* of supposing that we are *really* righteous, in consequence of being *accounted* so by God. And he quotes the Church of England homily on Salvation, which says, that "now every true Christian man may be *called* a fulfiller of the law; for, as much as their infirmity lacketh, Christ's righteousness hath supplied."

On hearing such statements, who can help exclaiming, in the language of the Church of England Articles, This is indeed "a doctrine very full of comfort?" Had I any Roman Catholics before me, I should be tempted to exclaim further, How can ye refuse to swallow the delicious opiate? Is not this far preferable to your lacerating scourges, your mortifying fasts, your laborious pilgrimages? Not only are these "commandments of men" set aside for your accommodation, but the declaration of the Great Being who said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" [Matt. xix. 17]; and of his beloved disciple, who said, "Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous" [1 John iii. 7]; and, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" [Ch. ii. 4]:—all are annulled together! By simply believing the testimony of Scripture concerning Jesus Christ, his infinite righteousness may be "made over" (this is the technical phrase,) to you; and although you do not come into possession of it *really*, God will *reckon* it as yours, which will do quite as well: and whenever you feel that you want absolution, instead of seeking your priest, you have only to exercise, anew, faith in the testimony, and all that you want again becomes yours. Indeed as the imputed righteousness is infinite, your lack of personal righteousness can easily be made up, whether such lack be little, or much, or *total*. Surely you can have no objection to renounce the Romish for the Protestant faith thus attractively exhibited: unless, indeed, you should perceive, that the tendency of this doctrine, is to slacken the obligations to moral obedience; to lull the conscience to sleep; to contradict all experimental knowledge of the frame of the human mind; and to render the Word of God of none effect through men's traditions. In this case, notwithstanding you may still cleave



to your useless mummeries and vain expiations, you will apply to such teachers and doctrines the words of Jehovah by the prophet: "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there was no peace" [Jer. viii. 11]. And should you, as you easily may, become convinced of the many corruptions which have *really* been introduced into the Church of Rome, you will not therefore feel bound to embrace the doctrine of Justification by Faith Only: but you will endeavour to separate the wheat from the chaff, under the guidance of the Word of God.

My Christian and rational brethren! this is the mode of procedure which I would affectionately recommend to you all. Imagine not that the truth is exclusively possessed either by Roman Catholics or Protestants, but examine the Word of God for yourselves. You will pardon me, I trust, for the strong picture that I have laid before you of the popular doctrine of Justification: I have done it in the discharge of what I believe to be my duty, without any personal disrespect towards any one, but with a sincere desire for the best interests of all. Depend upon it, Jesus Christ never came to justify you in your sins, but to enable you to turn from your sins, and to become just or righteous, through the communication of grace from him, and thus to be really justified. And do not delay the necessary work of turning to him too long. Death-bed repentances are never to be depended upon, and man can neither become just, nor be justified, in one moment. We read of some who began to labour in the Lord's vineyard so late as at the eleventh hour, and who received a generous reward: but we read of none who received a reward at the twelfth hour, without having ever laboured at all. If such cases are at all possible, they must be very rare, and can only exist under very peculiar circumstances. Trust not to such a chance. Set about the works required of you by your Heavenly Father while it is called to-day: Turn to him in sincerity, with faith in his Manifestation of himself in the Person of Jesus Christ. Then, through his mercy and redemption, former iniquities will be blotted out, you will receive a real righteousness from him which will be imputed to

you as your own, and you will obtain the blessing of actual Justification.

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NOTE REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING LECTURE, PAGE 431.

At the page mentioned, I have stated, that "Luther, in a passage of his writings which the Romish disputants do not fail to bring forward, acknowledges that he did [depart from the Word of God] in excluding good works from all share in man's justification;" and I had before ventured to say, that "his writings but too plainly evince the folly of taking him for an infallible guide, for many indeed are the crudities and weaknesses which they display" [P. 430]. In support of these statements, I take the following Note, by the Editors, to the Critique on Mr. Bickersteth's "Discourse on Justification by Faith," in the *Intellectual Repository* for April, 1828, pages 79 *et seq*; to which I am obliged for most of the facts and arguments contained in the latter portion of the preceding Lecture :

"As an example of the advantage which Protestants give to Romanists by their doctrine of faith alone, and as a further specimen of the writings of Luther, we subjoin the following extract from the speech of Mr. Grady, one of the Romanist advocates, at a recent discussion between the two parties at Freemason's Tavern. He said, 'They (the Catholics) were charged with superseding the atonement of Christ by masses and works of supererogation : but—he would show them what the absolute doctrine of the atonement led to. He would read a passage or two from the writings of the grand Apostle of the Reformation, Martin Luther, on this subject, in the first volume of his works, published at Wittemberg, folio 147 : 'Though the 'Papists [writes Luther] bring heaps of Scriptures, as commanding good works, yet I care not for them, though they bring 'more. Thou, Papist, art very brag with thy works and Scripture ; yet Scripture is a servant of Christ ; therefore it moves 'me nothing. Rely thou upon the servant : I will rely upon the 'Master and Lord of Scripture : to him I yield ; and I know

‘he will not lead me into error. I will rather adhere to him, ‘than, for all Scriptures, to be altered a hair’s breadth from my ‘opinion.’ [But where, except in the Scriptures, are we to find the mind of Him whom he calls the Master and Lord of Scripture? He seems to claim some private revelation not derived through the Scriptures, and in plain contrariety to them.—S. N.] As to the Ten Commandments [Mr. Grady continues], he expresses himself thus: ‘Therefore the Ten Commandments do ‘not belong to us Christians, but only to Jews: which is proved ‘out of the text, speaking to them whom he brought out of Egypt, ‘who were Jews, not Christians. We will not admit that any ‘the least precept of Moses be imposed upon us. Therefore look ‘that Moses with all his law be sent packing, *in malam rem*— ‘with a mischief,—and that thou be not moved with any terror ‘of him, but hold him suspected for a heretic, cursed and damned, ‘and worse than the pope or the devil.’ ‘He [Mr. Grady] need not tell them that this man was the Apostle of the Reformers, though they called Wickliffe their morning star. [He then read some extracts from Wesleyan and other writers, particularly from Richard Hill, Esq. and Mr. Wesley: after which he proceeded]: These then were the reformers—this the Justification by Faith! It was hard to say which was more horrible,—the curse of Luther upon Moses, or the Wesleyan blasphemies against the justice of God.’—Mr. Grady afterwards said, ‘The doctrine of faith without works was a most horrid and pernicious doctrine.’ In allusion to a remark of Mr. McNeile’s, he exclaimed, ‘The genius of the Gospel displayed on the death-bed of a thief and a murderer! He knew not that Society could exist for one hour under the influence of this glorious idea.’ None of the Protestant champions, who spoke after Mr. Grady encountered him on this point, though some of them ably exposed the corruptions of the Romanists in their suppression of the Scriptures and the worship of saints and angels.” To this I will add,—No wonder that these discussions convince so few on either side, when each party can bring such unanswerable arguments against the other.

## LECTURE XXVII.

THE ASTRONOMICAL DOCTRINE OF A PLURALITY OF WORLDS  
IRRECONCILABLE WITH THE POPULAR SYSTEMS OF THEOLOGY,  
BUT IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH THE TRUE CHRISTIAN RE-  
LIGION.

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JOHN X. 16.

*“ And other sheep I have which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice : and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.”*

BEFORE we close this series of Lectures, I will call your attention to a most interesting subject, on which some of the doctrines that we have considered, viewed as we have presented them, cast a most pleasing effulgence, removing all theological difficulties which oppose the admission of its reality and certainty ; and which, in its turn, goes far to confirm the truth of those doctrines, as advocated in our previous Lectures, as the genuine decisions of the True Christian Religion. The subject to which I allude is that of the Plurality of Worlds,—the belief, that the planets of our Solar System, and those which are supposed to revolve round the innumerable other solar orbs in the universe, are Inhabited Earths, peopled by rational beings, essentially the same in nature as the Human Race. The design of this Lecture, then, shall be to evince, *That whilst the Astronomical Doctrine of a Plurality of Worlds is irreconcilable with the Popular Systems of Theology, it is in perfect harmony with the True Christian Religion.*

Science has advanced, during modern and recent times, with very extraordinary steps, and has developed truths of which former ages had no conception. In no respect is the addition

thus made to the mass of human knowledge more conspicuous and striking, than in the sublime speculations and demonstrations of Astronomy. And the most magnificent of the facts which the assiduity, sagacity, and improved means of observation, of modern astronomers have brought to light, is the almost overwhelming discovery, that the globe on which we dwell is not, as untutored and unassisted nature would imagine, the only inhabited earth in the universe, but is merely one among thousands, and myriads, and millions, of worlds. I speak of this as a fact, and a discovery. I do not mean that Astronomy can teach us the existence of other inhabited earths, with the same kind of evidence as that by which she demonstrates the motions of this planetary system. The other earths which the telescope can actually show us are but few, and no glasses have power to bring their inhabitants within the sphere of our vision. Yet presumptive proof is afforded in abundance, and of a kind little less convincing than absolute demonstration ;—such proof, in fact, as only that mind can resist, which has opinions of another kind, esteemed of still greater moment, to uphold,—which dreads to admit the most elevating truths of Science, under the apprehension that it must renounce, in exchange for them, the saving truths of Revelation.

For it is but too true, (and none, I trust, will take offence at my making the observation,) that while natural knowledge has been advancing with such rapid steps, divine knowledge has long remained stationary, if it have not become absolutely retrograde. The system of Divinity at present generally established was formed, as to its substance, in the darkness of the middle ages. As has been intimated in previous Lectures, though the light of the Reformation from Popery was about co-eval in its rise with the revival of learning, the dogmas which were then established evince but too plainly, that the improvements which were beginning to be made in natural knowledge, were accompanied by but a very moderate share of discernment in spiritual subjects. The consequence has been, that, as Science has advanced, she has in a great measure thrown off the character, which is that of her highest dignity, of the handmaid of Theology. Instead of continuing the faithful and useful servant

of her former august mistress, she has, in the estimation of too many, been set up as her rival ; and numbers who have professed to venerate her, including, doubtless, many of her sincere admirers, have, in consequence, unavoidably been led to regard Theology with contempt. Nor has this arisen from any fault of Science in itself. True Science is the knowledge of the works of God in the domains of nature ; and it is impossible that the highest attainments in this knowledge can discover any thing inimical to true Theology, which is the knowledge of God himself, and of his works in the kingdoms of grace. If the Scriptures also, be truly the Word of God, it is impossible that there can be any real contradiction between them and his works. It is, however, only between true Theology and true Science that there can be any just correspondence ; and while the latter must ever attend, as an humble handmaid, on the former, she will also, as a loyal subject, expose the pretensions of every intruder that would usurp the throne of her legitimate queen.

But a word of caution may here be expedient. Before any doctrine commonly accepted as a truth of Religion is rejected on the testimony of Science, it behooves us to be most thoroughly satisfied that Science has spoken out. Science has her fallacies as well as Theology ; which have quite as often, and perhaps as long, imposed on the understandings of mankind. Many are the ridiculous fancies, which, under the name of Science, have had their advocates and their admirers. Nevertheless, when Science presents a fact which is demonstrably true, or which is deduced from demonstrated facts by rational inference not less clear and convincing, we may be certain that no religious doctrine which is totally irreconcilable with it, can be a truth of genuine Theology. But here another caution, equally important with the former, also becomes necessary. When any truth of Science irresistibly militates against a certain doctrine of Theology, we are not to conclude that it militates equally against the Holy Scriptures, from which such doctrine is reputed to be drawn. That the Scriptures are truly entitled to be received as the Word of God, is demonstrable by evidence quite as convincing as any that can be given for the first truths of Science ; [as the Author has endeavoured to show in the work

entitled, "The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures Asserted," &c.] All that is proved, then, when any positive truth of Science is found to be inconsistent with any received doctrine of Theology, is, that the doctrine impugned is a tenet of false Theology, not justly deduced from the Scriptures; and that the texts on which it is supposed to be founded are misunderstood and falsified. When such discrepancies between the truths of Science and commonly received doctrines, are used as arguments against the truth of the Scriptures themselves, it is commonly done by men whose enmity to Divine Revelation arises from other sources: though such difficulties also minister occasion of great anxiety and doubt to the humble and sincere.

Such then has been the case, in a remarkable manner, with the astronomical doctrine of a Plurality of Worlds. From the time of its first introduction, among the moderns, till the present day, it has been seen, by those who are called orthodox, to be not fairly reconcilable with the doctrines prevailing in the Christian world, on the cause, nature, and design, of the coming in the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ: and although the strong evidence which it carries with it has obtained for it almost general adoption among the vulgar as well as among the learned, yet many of the stricter disciples of the popular system of theology have entered their earnest caveat against it. When Sir I. Newton published his *Principia*, in which the true theory of the planetary motions, previously propounded by Copernicus, is clearly demonstrated, and thus the existence of a plurality of worlds in the visible universe is made in the highest degree probable, the learned and ingenious Mr. Hutchinson published, in opposition, a work which he denominated the *Principia of Moses*: in which he endeavours to establish, as a point both of science and religion, the antiquated doctrine that this is the only inhabited natural earth: and though his system is extremely intricate, and perplexed with great difficulties, it has been followed by many learned persons even till the present times,—mainly because the doctrine of a plurality of worlds was felt by them to be incompatible with certain favorite tenets of modern Christianity. On this account, even so eminent a man as the late Lord President Forbes endeavors, in his works, to dis-

countenance the opinion that the heavenly bodies were created for any other purpose than their use to this earth. Even so recently as when the Astronomical doctrine was advocated by the celebrated Dr. Chalmers, and endeavored to be combined with a belief in the common system of theology, a very ingenious volume, full of multifarious reading, was published in answer; the author of which strongly reprehended the admission by Christian divines of the popular astronomical doctrine on the ground of its absolute irreconcilableness to the doctrine of the atonement, and its consequent tendency, as he conceived, to nothing but absolute Deism: and so many of the professing Christian world agreed with him in sentiment, that two editions of his work were called for [See note A].

What the plain and honest believers in the popular system of theology have seen to be involved in the doctrine of a plurality of worlds, the Deists have plainly enough seen also; and, assuming the doctrines usually taught as those of Christianity to be those of the Scriptures themselves, they have not failed to urge this astronomical truth as a demonstrative argument against the truth of the Christian Religion and of Divine Revelation. The notorious infidel, Paine, in his usual style of dogmatism and arrogance, is pleased to say, "The system of a plurality of worlds renders the Christian faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the mind like feathers in the air. The two beliefs cannot be held together in the same mind: and he who thinks he believes both, has thought but little of either." Affirmed of the Christian faith as it is in itself, these assertions are most scandalously false: but affirmed of the Christian faith, as it is commonly represented, it cannot be denied that they have but too much foundation in truth. Surely then it is time that a view of Christianity should be made known which rescues the Christian faith from this reproach,—which restores the agreement between the doctrines of Theology and the truths of Science,—and which exhibits the works of God in redemption, as completely worthy of, and fully co-extensive with, his works in creation. When erroneous conceptions of Christianity are compelled to quail before the boasts of presumptuous Infidelity,—as Saul and his hosts lay cowering in their tents at the



dreaded voice of the champion of Gath; it is fit that purer sentiments should be permitted, though despised and repelled like David, to undertake the conflict. It is genuine Truth alone that can say, with no misgivings at heart, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

I might here entertain you by offering a sketch of the modern astronomical theory of the universe, which would afford ample matter to interest both your imagination and your feelings: but as, in the limits which I must observe in a single Lecture, I could do no more than present a very general outline: and as, besides, minute scientific details would be out of place in a theological discourse; I forbear to dwell upon this attractive part of the subject. It has been done at great length, and under various forms of eloquent amplification, in the popular Discourses of Dr. Chalmers. All the knowledge of the subject requisite for our present purpose, is to be found in every elementary work upon astronomy. I presume, therefore, that it is perfectly familiar to you all. As, however, something appears necessary to be stated, as a base for our subsequent observations, I will make an extract or two from an author with whom few are acquainted, which contain, in the compass of a nutshell, all the arguments in behalf of a plurality of worlds which are spread over so wide a space by Chalmers; while they offer suggestions as to the cause of the mighty phenomenon, which others have entirely overlooked, and which render the whole discovery as delightful in the eye of piety as it is obvious to the eye of science.

The author I am about to quote, is the much slandered Emanuel Swedenborg; who is too often made the object of ridicule and misrepresentation by the unthinking and uninformed, though he will ever command the esteem of the reflecting and the truly wise, when they have duly examined his system. He states the question thus: "Any man of an enlarged understanding may conclude, from various considerations, that there is a plurality of earths, and that they are inhabited by human creatures. It is a suggestion of reason, that so great masses of matter as the planets are, some of which far exceed this earth in

magnitude, are not empty balls created only to revolve round the sun, and to transmit their scanty measure of light for the benefit of this earth ; but that their use must needs be more enlarged and eminent. He who believes, as every one ought to believe, that the Deity created the universe for no other end, but that the human race, and thereby heaven, might have existence (for the human race is the seminary of heaven), must needs believe also, that wheresoever there is an earth, there are human inhabitants. That the planets which are visible to our eyes, as being within the boundaries of this solar system, are earths, may appear manifest from this consideration : that they are bodies of earthy matter ; because they reflect the light of the sun, and, when seen through a telescope, they do not appear as stars, glittering like flame, but as earth, variegated with opaque spots. The same may appear further from this consideration : that they, like our earth, perform their revolutions around the sun, through the path of the zodiac ; whence they have their years, and seasons of the year, as spring, summer, autumn, and winter ; and, in like manner, that they revolve about their own axis : whence they have their days, and times of the day, as morning, noon, evening, and night. Some of them, also, have moons called their satellites, which perform their revolutions round them, as the moon does round our earth. The planet Saturn also, as being so distant from the sun, has, beside his moons, a large luminous belt, which supplies by reflection much light to that earth. How is it possible for any reasonable person, acquainted with these facts, to imagine that such bodies are void, and without inhabitants ?” These remarks apply to the planets or earths which we see with our eyes belonging to our solar system : but with respect to other suns and their dependant earths the same author delivers his views thus : “ That there is a plurality of systems, also, may appear from this consideration : that so many stars are seen in the universe ; and it is known to the learned that every star is like a sun in its own place, remaining fixed as the sun of our earth does in its place ; and that it is only owing to its distance that it appears small like a star ; consequently, that each star, like the sun in our system, hath planets revolving round it, which are so many earths : and that the

reason why those planets or earths are not seen, is, because of their immense distance, and of their having no light but what they receive from their own star or sun, which cannot be reflected so far as to reach us. For what other end or purpose, can we imagine, so great a firmament was created, with so many stars? The end of the creation of the universe is man, in order that an angelic heaven might be formed of human beings: but what would be the race of men, and an angelic heaven thence formed, drawn from one single earth, to an Infinite Creator? To him, a thousand, yea, a myriad of earths, would be as nothing. It has been calculated, that supposing there were in the universe a million of earths, and on every earth three hundred millions of men, and two hundred generations to exist within six thousand years, and that to every man or spirit were allotted a space of three cubic ells, the sum of men or spirits collectively would not occupy a space equal to a thousandth part of this earth,—consequently not more than the space possessed by one of the satellites of Jupiter or Saturn; which would be a space so diminutive in respect to the universe, that it would be scarce discernible. What would this be in regard to the Creator of the universe, to whom the whole universe, though filled with earths, would be inadequate: for he is Infinite?" He dwells a little more on the end or design of the visible creation in another short passage: "Every considerate person is led to conclude, that so immense a whole as is formed by the starry heaven, must needs be a means to some end, which is the last end of creation; which end is, a heavenly kingdom, wherein God may dwell with angels and men. The visible universe, or the heaven resplendent with stars so innumerable, which are so many suns, is only a means, or medium, for the existence of earths, and of men upon them, out of whom may be formed a heavenly kingdom. From these considerations every reasonable person must be led to conceive, that so immense a means, adapted to so great an end, was not constituted for a race of men from one earth only, and for a heaven thence derived: for what would this be to the Deity, who is infinite, and to whom thousands, yea myriads of earths, all full of inhabitants, are comparatively little, and scarce of any amount" [See Note (B).]!

Behold, my brethren, the true cause of the immensity of the universe! though too generally overlooked by writers on the subject. Viewed with reference both to their origin and their design or end, the plurality of worlds which science discovers, will not be found inconceivable to the man of religion and piety. Can anything be too great, to be the work of a God who is Infinity itself, and all whose attributes are infinite like himself? Can any multiplicity of worlds be too numerous, which are created to furnish inhabitants for his heavenly kingdom,—to satisfy the cravings of his infinite love, and the desire which such love must ever feel,—to communicate good and blessing, to continually increasing multitudes, for ever and ever? Take this idea with you, and the mystery is solved. This conception admits us, as it were, into the sanctuary of the divine purposes: and when we behold these, and contemplate their ineffable benevolence, instead of doubting either whether God could or would create such a multitude of inhabited worlds, our only impulse must be, to glorify and bless his all-gracious name for having done so.

This view of the *cause* of there being such a plurality of worlds, also removes that sense of loneliness and destitution which a single human being might be apt to feel on the contemplation of the fact, viewing himself as lost, as it were, in this immensity of creation. Deists argue from it the improbability of any special interference whatever, on the part of the Maker of such a universe, in behalf of the inhabitants of this speck of a globe, and seem to imagine that any individual, as being but one among such an inconceivable number, must be entirely overlooked, and left to wander with no director but himself. Too many wish it to be so, and therefore they believe it! But who does not see, that while they here, on the one hand, exalt the infinity of the Creator, by acknowledging his works to be so boundless, they as much detract from it, on the other, by supposing that, though he can make rational creatures without limit, he must forget them as soon as they are made, and cannot take cognizance of one individual, or of all those of one earth, as easily as of the whole united assemblage? The greater, it is true, that the Creator appears in the eyes of

man, the greater must be man's sense of his own insignificance in comparison ; and if he have any devotional feelings, the greater must be his humility and his devotedness of adoration. This is most beautifully and affectingly expressed by the pen of inspiration : " When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained ; What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him ? " [Psalm viii. 3, 4.] Here is acknowledgment of the Lord's greatness, and of man's comparative littleness, joined with the recognition of the Lord's care and goodness, and with gratitude and adoration on that account. But when this acknowledgment of man's nothingness compared with his Creator, and of his insignificance in contrast with the whole extent of creation, is combined with a knowledge of the cause and reason of the creation being so boundless,—that it was so formed that it might be the seminary of a heaven commensurate, as far as possible, with the Infinite Love of its author,—in which God himself should dwell with the whole assembled multitude of the saved of the human race drawn from all worlds ;—then, instead of feeling any sense of being lost, or of forlornness, or of danger of being overlooked in so immense an assemblage, we derive, from this knowledge of the end, an assurance that the same Love is present with each of us, watching over us, and endeavouring to lead us, in such ways as are consistent with the necessary freedom of our nature, into the grand end, and that it is ever ready to supply whatever means may be requisite for its accomplishment. To imagine that he who created any particular world, or any particular man, will afterwards leave either that world or that man without farther attention, because he has so much more to attend to, is still more to deny his infinity than is done by imagining, that he never created any other world than this. It is to deny the infinity of his Love, the infinity of his Wisdom, his Omnipotence, his Omniscience, and his Omnipresence. How much wiser are they who are taught by Revelation ! " Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me. Whither shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there : if I make up my bed in hell, behold, thou art

there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" [Ps. cxxxix. 5, 7—10]. The man who has just conceptions of his Maker and of himself, knows full well that God dwells in every individual soul that ever he has formed as really as in the whole created universe. Subsistence, also, in the creed of true philosophy, is perpetual existence ; preservation is perpetual creation : wherever, therefore, anything whatever *is*, there also is the presence of its Creator still upholding it in life or being.

I have made these observations with the view of showing, that the Christian need not be scared at the astronomical doctrine of a plurality of worlds, as if it launched him into an ocean of need-less magnificence, where he was in danger of losing the protecting hand of his God. But some, perhaps, may wish to inquire if there is any express testimony of Scripture which bears upon the question.

If the inquiry go to this effect : Whether the Scriptures teach that there are numerous worlds in the universe : it must be answered, That the Scriptures nowhere teach, directly, mere truths of science, and were not given for any such purpose. But if they do not directly declare there to be a plurality of worlds, they deliver much which well combines with the belief of that discovery of science, and nothing which contradicts it. They tell us that God "made the stars;" and they nowhere define what the stars are [See Note C.]. They teach also very plainly that nothing was created in vain, and that, supposing there to be other earths beside this, they must have inhabitants. Magnificently is this declared in Isaiah : "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens ; God himself that formed the earth and made it ; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited" [Ch. xlv. 18]. If he formed this earth to be inhabited, and if to have done otherwise would have been to create it in vain, the same must be true of every other earth in the universe. There are various passages, also, which evince, that whatever other worlds there may be in the universe, they are as much dependant as this, for their existence and the eternal welfare of their inhabitants, on the Lord Jesus Christ.

By him, the Apostle Paul declares, God "made the worlds" [Heb. i. 2. See Note D.]; and John affirms respecting him, as the eternal Word before the incarnation, that "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made" [Ch. i. 3]. As then the Lord Jesus Christ stands connected with all worlds in the character of their maker, so does he likewise in the character of Redeemer. The passage I have taken as a text may be applied to this subject; for though it does not necessarily refer to human beings not natives of this world, it implies, that, if there are such other human beings, Jesus Christ will gather them into his fold,—take them under his care and protection :—"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." But there are several passages in the Epistles which speak of the gathering together in one of all things in Jesus Christ, in such a manner as necessarily includes the natives of all earths in the universe. The apostles do not expressly say that there is a plurality of worlds in outward nature; but they use expressions which come very near to such an assertion, and which fully evince, that, a plurality of worlds being otherwise proved, all must be gathered into the fold of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, in one place, God is spoken of as "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in the heavens and which are on earth" [Eph. i. 9, 10]. In another place, the Apostle speaks of his preaching "to make men see what is the *fellowship*, [according to the most correct reading of the original *dispensation*,] of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" [Chap. iii. 9—11]. So he says in the next chapter of the same Epistle, that our Lord "ascended up far above all heavens, that he might *fill all things*" [Ch. iv. 10]. So, to the

Colossians, he speaks of the universality of his work of atonement or reconciliation, in a manner that must include every world that is anywhere existing: his words are, "It pleased [the Father] that in him should all fulness dwell: and having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven" [Ch. i. 19, 20]. Such language as this, though it does not affirm a plurality of worlds, excepting heavenly ones, necessarily includes them if they exist. It proves that the benefit of the assumption by Jehovah of Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ extends throughout the whole universe of creation, how immense soever may be the amplitude of its domain.

We find then, clearly established by science, and confirmed, or, at least, not contradicted by Scripture, the majestic fact, that there is an indefinite plurality of worlds in the universe. It is also, we see, declared explicitly by Scripture, that there is nothing whatever in the universe, of which Jesus Christ, as the eternal Word prior to his incarnation, was not the Maker, and that the beneficial effects of his appearing in human nature extend to all beings in existence. But is this last proposition also consonant to reason and science? Is the fact itself of the appearance on this earth of the Eternal Word, who is God with God, and one with the Father, consistent with such a plurality of worlds as reason and science demonstrate to exist? Infidels declare that it is not, and make it a pretence for rejecting the authority of Divine Revelation. This brings us to the part of our argument which comes nearest home to our interests as immortals, and to our feelings as Christians.

What is there, then, in the doctrine of the appearance in the world of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is not consonant to reason and science,—which is irreconcilable with the astronomical doctrine of a plurality of worlds,—and which, therefore, infidels allege as a pretence for rejecting Divine Revelation? I answer without hesitation, The inconsonance and irreconcilableness only lie in the view of the nature and design of the appearance in the world of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is presented as the doctrine of the Christian Religion in the popular systems of theology. But permit me to say again, as I have said in



former Lectures, with all tenderness for the feelings of those who may think differently; that this is not really the doctrine of the Christian Religion, but is purely a mistaken conception, which has been allowed to obscure the true doctrine of the Christian Religion upon the subject, and to seize its place. True Science disowns the usurper, but maintains due allegiance to her legitimate mistress. The astronomical doctrine of the plurality of worlds does indeed demonstrate the falsity of the erroneous notion of the nature and design of the appearance in human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ: but this, with every other real truth of science, harmonizes most perfectly with every doctrine of the True Christian Religion. Thus, instead of weakening the authority of Divine Revelation, the belief of a plurality of worlds actually combines with and supports it. It only widens the base of the grand pyramid of Knowledge: and the broader the dimensions of the foundation composed of the truths of Science, the greater is the elevation obtained for the summit in which are located the truths of Theology,—the more are these exalted above the region of mists and deceptive appearances, and irradiated with the pure brilliancy of the light of heaven.

The Deist argues, that if there are so many myriads of earths in the universe, it is ridiculous to suppose that God should make this little world the chief object of his care, and should actually assume Humanity in it himself, to die as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of its inhabitants. Such a proposition, under such circumstances, is rather startling, to be sure: and if the doctrine of the Scriptures could be proved to be, that it was for the benefit of the inhabitants of this world alone, that Jehovah was pleased to become incarnate among them, the improbability of such an event would be very great indeed. Though his Providence is over all worlds, and his loving-kindness extends to every individual in each, the perfect order and all-embracing universality of his known modes of operation forbid the supposition, that the greatest and most wonderful of all his mighty acts of beneficence was a scheme that concerned but a single point in the universe. Yet, most certainly, the doctrine of the nature and design of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, as set forth in the creeds of almost all the professing churches at this day, is such as confines it to

the circumstances of this earth alone. That doctrine is, that, in consequence of the sin of Adam, as the first man, all his posterity fell under a curse which devoted them to death or misery eternal : but that the Lord Jesus Christ took the curse upon himself, paid the penalty of the sin of Adam and all his posterity in his own person, thus appeased the wrath of the Father, and satisfied his offended justice and the demands of the law, and so became the Author, to those who believe that he has done this, of life and salvation. This, and no other, is truly the doctrine of all the prevailing Churches at the present day : and this, undeniably, makes the assumption by God of Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, a measure which arose out of the circumstances of this world alone, and the proper benefits of which can belong to none but the lineal descendants of Adam. Join this with the fact of which Astronomy assures us, that all the descendants of Adam are (to borrow an illustration from Dr. Chalmers) but as a single leaf to a whole forest, compared with the natives of all the worlds in the creation, and the doctrine becomes invested with such improbability as to be justly incredible. Accordingly, we have seen that the most strict and consistent believers of the common doctrine of the nature and design of the Lord's appearance on earth, have held themselves bound to reject the belief of a plurality of worlds, and have joined the Deist in avowing that both beliefs cannot exist together.

The time however is long past since the denial by a few consistent persons of one of the most important and most convincing of the discoveries of Science, could answer the purpose of protecting the theological tenet, whose incompatibility with it is thus avowed. The belief of the astronomical doctrine has spread over the minds of all the population of Christendom like a flood, and it is in vain to endeavour again to shut out the overwhelming waters. The conviction which it brings with it of its truth is so strong, that almost every person who has received the commonest rudiments of education deems it absolutely certain : and the inevitable consequence is, that either an improved view of the nature and design of the Lord's birth in this world must be accepted, or there must be an immense increase of

infidelity. Divines have for some time been sensible that something must be done to remove the obvious irreconcilableness of the two doctrines, and have made some attempts for the purpose, even to the extent of new dressing out the theological tenet in a manner which Luther, Calvin, and all the early reformers would have denounced as heresy ; and yet they have retained so much of the common view of the subject, as to make their labours a motley piece of patchwork, utterly incapable of satisfying either the consistent believer in religion or the most candid among its opponents. It was because the celebrated Dr. Chalmers undertook to remove the difficulty, in his "Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connexion with the modern Astronomy," and disguised the weak points of his argument by the splendour of his style, that his work attained such extraordinary popularity : most professors of religion felt the dilemma, and were ready to hail any thing with joy, which, without taking away their favourite tenets in theology, appeared in any degree to remove it. But though Dr. Chalmers' talents must ever entitle him to great respect, it can hardly be denied that his efforts to remove it were completely nugatory. He professes, indeed, not to allow that Christianity is designed for the single benefit of our world, and, with many taunts, defies the Deist to prove it : but how it contributes to the benefit of the inhabitants of other earths and systems, he leaves the Infidel to discover for himself ; he deigns not to assist his benighted intellect by a single suggestion that could really lead to a solution of his difficulties. He affirms, in general, vague, and shadowy terms, that a benefit may have been conferred on the whole creation : but when he offers anything positive and definite, he keeps within the precincts of this world only. All that he suggests in the way of advantage to the natives of other earths, from the incarnation of our Lord among us, is, that it must supply them with argument for admiration, and for devout and pleasing contemplation : and even this stands upon the perfectly gratuitous assumption, that, while we have been left so completely in the dark respecting the state, and even the existence, of other earths, they are most minutely informed respecting the condition and transactions of this ! He never attempts to es-

tablish the fact, which, alone, the man of reason would deem worthy of attention,—that the redemption wrought here, was equally the redemption of the universe :—doubtless, because he saw that, for redemption to be thus universal, it must be of a very different kind from that which the popular creed has taught him. The following is a specimen of his manner of describing the grand mystery, and its use to the (as he supposes) innocent and holy inhabitants of other worlds.

“Surely, surely, where delight in God is the constant enjoyment, and the earnest contemplation of God is the constant exercise, there is nothing in the whole compass of nature or of history, that can so set his adoring myriads upon the gaze, as some new and wondrous evolution of the character of God. Now this is found in the plan of our redemption ; nor do I see how in any transaction between the great Father of existence, and the children who have sprung from him, the moral attributes of the Deity could, if I may so express myself, be put to so severe and so delicate a test. It is true, that the great matters of sin and of salvation, fall without impression on the heavy ears of a listless and alienated world. But they who, to use the language of the Bible, are light in the Lord, look otherwise at these things. They see sin in all its malignity, and salvation in all its mysterious greatness. Ay, and it would put them on the stretch of all their faculties, when they saw rebellion lifting up its standard against the Majesty of heaven, and the truth and the justice of God embarked on the threatenings he had uttered against all the doers of iniquity, and the honours of that august throne, which has the firm pillars of immutability to rest upon, linked with the fulfilment of the law that had come out from it ; and when nothing else was looked for, but that God by putting forth the power of his wrath should accomplish his every denunciation, and vindicate the inflexibility of his government, and by one sweeping deed of vengeance, assert, in the sight of all his creatures, the sovereignty which belonged to him—Oh ! with what desire must they have pondered on his ways, when amid the urgency of all these demands which looked so high and so indispensable, they saw the unfoldings of the attribute of mercy—and that the Supreme Lawgiver

was bending upon his guilty creatures an eye of tenderness—and that in his profound and unsearchable wisdom, he was devising for them some plan of restoration—and that the eternal Son had to move from his dwelling-place in heaven, to carry it forward through all the difficulties by which it was encompassed—and that, after by the virtue of his mysterious sacrifice, he had magnified the glory of every other perfection, he made mercy rejoice over them all, and throw open a way by which we, sinful and polluted wanderers, might, with the whole lustre of the Divine Character untarnished, be re-admitted into fellowship with God, and be again brought within the circle of his loyal and affectionate family.” [Discourses, p. 140—142, tenth edition]. These are the views which, in these popular discourses, are reiterated over and over again. Redemption is a plan for reconciling the divine attribute of goodness with that of vindictive justice, and for redeeming the character of the Almighty from the disgrace (I shudder while I say it) which according to the popular system of theology would attach to it, were he to indulge in the exercise of mercy, without first inflicting somewhere the extreme amount of the penalty of guilt.

[Read over again the preceding extract, and say whether it does not fully coincide with the statements I have given of the popular doctrine in preceding Lectures].

The objection as to the fewness of those for whom this salvation was actually wrought, is answered by a slight modification of the same general considerations. “Yes,” says the eloquent discourser, “it [this earth] is but a twinkling atom in the peopled infinity of worlds that are around it—but look at the moral grandeur of the transaction, and not to the material extent of the field upon which it was executed—and from the retirement of our dwelling place, they may issue forth such a display of the Godhead, as will circulate the glories of his name amongst all his worshippers. Here sin entered. Here was the kind and unwearied beneficence of a Father, repaid by the ingratitude of a whole family. Here the law of God was dishonoured, and that too in the face of its proclaimed and unalterable sanctions. Here the mighty contest of the attributes was ended—and when justice puts forth its demands, and truth

called for the fulfilment of its warnings, and the immutability of God would not recede by a single iota from any one of its positions, and all the severities he had ever uttered against the children of iniquity seemed to gather into one cloud of threatening vengeance on the tenement that held us—did the visit of the only begotten Son chase away all these obstacles to the triumph of mercy—and humble as the tenement may be, deeply shaded in the obscurity of insignificance as it is among the statelier mansions which are on every side of it—yet will the recall of its exiled family never be forgotten—and the illustration that has been given here of the mingled grace and majesty of God, will never lose its place among the themes and acclamations of eternity.” [Ibid. p. 153, 154.]

[Again I ask, Does not this go the full length of the statements given of the received doctrine in preceding Lectures?]

[But] strip all this of its magniloquent diction, and how poor are the ideas which remain! how unsatisfactory to the eye of reason does it appear—if reason should venture to look through declamation which appeals solely to the feelings—considered as presenting the mode of the redemption of this world only! but how utterly weak is the apology which it offers for the common doctrine of the design and use of the Lord’s incarnation, when viewed in connexion with the existence of myriads of other earths! Certainly, such a defence of “the Christian Revelation, viewed in connexion with the modern Astronomy,” as these “Discourses” supply, amounts to little less than absolute betrayal of the cause. [See note E.]

Other writers, such as Dr. Beattie, Dr. Porteus, and Dr. E. Nares, have handled the same argument. Some of these have suggested considerations which do really tend to combine the theological doctrine of the appearance and sufferings on earth of the Lord Jesus Christ with the astronomical doctrine of the plurality of worlds: but then, all that they have offered which is truly weighty and satisfactory on the subject, is *quite inconsistent with the theological doctrine as commonly received and understood*. They, indeed, do not reject the common theological doctrine: on the contrary, they profess to maintain it: but then, it would be quite as difficult to combine their really satisfactory argu-

ments into coherence with it, as to combine the common doctrine itself with the belief of a plurality of worlds. Dr. Nares in particular, both in diligence and intelligence, has far outstripped all the others, and his work on the subject contains many sublime and truly valuable thoughts. In the words of the sturdy opponent of Dr. Chalmers and uncompromising advocate of the popular system, whom I mentioned in the former part of this discourse, "Dr. Nares considers the mediation of Christ to have several mysteries, or unknown aspects,—a sort of universal mediation and redemption for beings in general, who form one universe." ["Plurality of Worlds," p. 190, second edition.] Still these really satisfactory opinions are quite at variance with the common doctrine upon the subject, though Dr. Nares professes to hold them, somehow, in connexion with it. To apply, with a little modification, the accurate judgment of the writer just cited: "When you attempt to make these sentiments coalesce with the popular system of theology, a discrepancy becomes visible. It is like applying a new piece of cloth to an old garment for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse." [Ib. p. 193, 194.] Besides, Dr. Nares acknowledges that he has read the work upon the subject by the truly enlightened author from whom I gave some extracts in the preceding part of this Lecture, together with some other works from the same pen. It is thence, I apprehend, that he has derived his best ideas. In any case, all that he offers upon the subject which is truly valuable, is to be regarded, not as in any degree the offspring of the common theological doctrines, but as part of that system of pure Christian truth, which it is the object of this Lecture, and of all my humble labours, to recommend to your attention. See Note (F).]

Evident then, I think it is, and must on all hands be admitted, that the astronomical truth of the existence of a plurality of worlds, is utterly at variance with the doctrine respecting the nature and design of the appearance in the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ, as presented in the popular systems of theology. But it is not therefore at variance with the Christian faith itself: on the contrary, it is in perfect harmony with the doc-

trine of the assumption of Humanity by the One Jehovah for the redemption and salvation of the human race at large, which forms the first and greatest of that system of doctrines which we have endeavored to advocate and explain in these Lectures as those of the True Christian Religion.

No "scheme of salvation," we have seen, can be satisfactory to the rational mind, which supposes so wonderful a divine interference as the appearance in human nature of God himself, to have been designed for no other immediate object than the recovery of the inhabitants of this globe. Nor is the manner in which even the redemption of this globe is supposed to have been effected,—by, in Dr. Chalmers' wild language, "ending the mighty contest of the attributes" of God,—by devising a plan by which divine wrath might be satiated without its falling upon the original offenders,—at all more congenial to the most clear apprehensions of enlightened understanding. But present a view which exhibits the extent of the operation worthy of the Agent who effected it,—which makes the redemption of our world the redemption at the same time of all the worlds in the universe, and requisite even to the stability of the heavenly mansions; and which represents it, also, not as the result of any "contest" of the divine attributes, but of the united concurrence of them all;—and you have a conception which is at least grand and philosophic; and of which it cannot be said, should it fail to obtain acceptance, that it is because it is contradicted by any fact of science, or is at variance with any of the suggestions of reason. As to the Scriptures, it has all their suffrages in its favour: it is, in fact, the only system which does not place the Word of God in contradiction to itself. Such is the system which, in the preceding Lectures, I have endeavoured to lay before you.

Allow me to add,—what Dr. Nares has with great propriety remarked,—that the notion that this is the only world in the universe into which evil has entered, or the inhabitants of which are in a state of imperfection, is a purely gratuitous supposition and one, which is highly improbable in itself. Man, in this world it is acknowledged on all hands, was endowed at his creation with free-will (more properly termed, as it is, by the



writers in Latin, *freedom of choice*): and it might easily be shown, though we have not time to go into such a subject now, that without freedom of choice there can be no being created of a rational and immortal nature. Freedom then to choose between good and evil, as necessary to be the subject of the imputation of either, must have been an attribute of the rational natives of all the other earths in the universe as well as of ours. Where there is this freedom, although no one can be under a necessity of abusing it by turning from good to evil, it yet is a matter of moral certainty that some *will* do so; and thus it is a matter of the highest probability, that evil, to a greater or less extent, has appeared in every earth in the universe. Suppose it have not, the liability to it must surely be granted to be certain. It is impossible to conceive of created beings, possessing a moral nature, who should not be placed, in the initiatory stage of their existence, in a state of probation, that they might form, under the divine auspices, a distinct moral character of their own,—might make attainments, as of themselves, in wisdom and virtue, to be the basis of all their higher improvements, in goodness and happiness, throughout eternity. [See Note (G).] Though they can acquire nothing that is good but by receiving it as a gift from its Divine Origin, they must, by being placed in a probationary state, so receive it as that it may be appropriated, and imputed to them as their own. That they should do this, must be the will of a beneficent Creator: but they cannot do it, without having the power of doing the contrary,—of employing their high faculties in a manner the opposite of that for which they were bestowed: which abuse, therefore, is permitted by the infinitely beneficent God, because without it, the use could not exist. Thus, no natural world could be created, the entrance into which of evil should be impossible. But where it has once entered, as the parent transmits to his offspring the same nature as he has contracted himself, including an inclination towards the same pursuits as had become predominant in him, it obviously might go on increasing till at length the very capacity of following other pursuits should become extinct, and the original freedom of the race should be destroyed. Should this ever be the case, the degenerate creatures would cease to be men:

they would cease also to be immortal : and, it is to be presumed, they would cease to exist altogether. If such a deluge of iniquity should not bring a flood of waters over the earth, thus to suffocate its inhabitants, and to destroy them by depriving the body of the air which it inhales from without, it would shut out the life which flows into the soul from heaven, and perhaps might cut them off by a suffocation equally fatal. In this world, we are taught by Revelation, there was, at least, imminent danger of such a catastrophe : and it was from this cause, as we understand to be the doctrine of the True Christian Religion that redemption here became necessary. But, it is obvious, that whether the same circumstances have occurred in any other earth or not, they are such as must be possible, and even probable, with regard to every other earth in the universe. A redemption, then, which would apply to the circumstances of our earth, must, either actually or potentially, be the redemption of all the universe beside. All earths either have required it, or in the course of indefinite duration, were likely to require it. By effecting a redemption, therefore, that would suit the necessities of this earth, provision is made against every possible contingency, and the preservation is secured of the connection with its Creator of every earth in the universe.

But what sort of a redemption must it be which would be thus effectual, either to the preservation of one world or of a universe ? Certainly, not such a one as is commonly taught, consisting in a deliverance from an arbitrary curse of an arbitrary law, through the endurance, by a Divine Person, in man's stead, of the penalty supposed to be demanded. It is truly surprising how men can have so misinterpreted the statements of Scripture, as thus to have delineated its sublime and spiritual doctrines. Such a redemption could have no effect in altering the circumstances of the human race, or in making their attainment of individual salvation at all more easy. Pardon a confirmed thief at the gibbet, without communicating to him any new means of resisting the evil habits which had brought him there ; and the next session or assizes will send him thither again. Redemption, to be effectual, cannot consist in the Redeemer's enduring the punishment of sin in man's stead : but in

conferring on him a new power of abstaining from it, by removing, in some way, from its effect on his mind, the preponderating influence of evil and of hell, and in imparting to him an increased measure of influences from heaven, adequate to the counteraction of all the tendencies and excitements to evil to which he could ever be exposed, from any cause or source whatever. It must, in fact, as stated in a former Lecture, consist in the restoration of him to that state of freedom in which he stood at first, notwithstanding the evil bias which had since become ingenerate in his nature, and the infernal agencies to which he had become exposed, as the kingdom of darkness had arisen and been increased from the lost of the human race.

Now it appears evident, that the accomplishment of this object must be by a divine operation very different from any which had existed before; and that the divine influences requisite for holding man in a state of freedom, and for still presenting good to his acceptance in such a manner as that he could receive and appropriate it, now that his state was so changed, must be very different from those which were requisite when he was in a state of greater purity. Is it then unreasonable to suppose, that, for the accomplishment of such purposes, the Divine Being would even accommodate himself, and the mode, so to speak, of his own existence, to the necessities of his creation? Infidelity may ridicule such a thought, as impossible in itself, or unnecessary to Divine Omnipotence: but sound reason and philosophy will pause, before they come to so hasty a conclusion. We have stated when treating on the subject, that God is Omnipotent, because, whatever end his wisdom sees fit to be accomplished, he can provide the means necessary for doing it; but to advance to the accomplishment of its ends without providing the appropriate means, must be as impossible to divine Omnipotence, as it is for man to execute any piece of workmanship without arms and hands. Between finite and infinite, it is to be remembered, there can be no relation: how then could the Infinite God descend to the creation of the objects of nature, but by first putting forth, in a manner, some active medium from himself? This was seen both by the ancient philosophers and the early Christian fathers: they therefore maintained, that

the Divine Logos—the Mind, Reason, or Word of God—which had always been included in the Divine Essence, went forth out of it, but without any separation from it, for the purposes of creation. This the ancient Christians affirmed to be plainly taught at the commencement of John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word [*Logos*]: and the Word [*Logos*] was with God, and the Word [*Logos*] was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not any thing made that was made" [Ch. i. 1—3]. The same Divine Principle, or Eternal Logos, which made all things, was also the Light, from which rational creatures have the faculty of understanding: "In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men" [Ver. 4]. But when man had sunk into the merely natural part of his constitution, he was no longer capable of receiving this Light in the mode in which it then existed: "The Light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" [Ver. 5]. Wherefore, that man might not utterly fall away and perish,—that, sunk into his merely natural part as he was, he might again be placed in a free state of probation, be held in a state still capable of receiving good and blessing from the hand of his Heavenly Father, and thus be brought back to the proper order of his creation, and to the bosom of his God,—his God was pleased to accommodate his own mode of existence, and of presenting himself to his creatures, so as to meet their every necessity: "The Word [*Logos*] was made flesh, and dwelt among us.—And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" [Ver. 14, 16].

Thus was effected the conjunction by God of his creation, in all worlds, with himself. This being necessary, also, to secure the permanence in existence of created beings, it doubtless was in the divine contemplation, from the beginning of creation, and before it, thus to clothe himself with the Human Principle, when what the Scriptures call "the fulness of time," or the proper state of this and of other worlds, should have arrived. And this is what the Apostle means to speak of, when he mentions "the eternal purpose" of God [Eph. i. 9; ch. iii. 9, 11].

One other remark may be required. If it were thus necessary to the salvation of the rational inhabitants of all worlds, and

even to the permanence of creation, that Jehovah should clothe himself with Human Nature, it is equally so that some one world out of the myriads in existence should be made the scene of this great event. That ours should be pitched upon for the purpose, is quite as likely, even according to the doctrine of chances, as that it should take place in any other. But there doubtless are especial reasons why this world, in preference to any other, should be made choice of for the purpose. I will only suggest, that, supposing there to be one earth in the universe the inhabitants of which, possibly by their original constitution, are of a more external nature than those of any other, and who, at any rate, have sunk deeper into that part of their frame which allies man to the earth; we may reasonably infer that that would be the earth in which Jehovah would take Humanity upon him; because no otherwise could his purpose so well be accomplished of "saving to the uttermost" [Heb. vii. 25]. That there must be some earth that stands in this situation, is certain: and, undoubtedly, every candid observer must admit, that is impossible to conceive of any other abode in the universe, out of hell itself, in which the nature of a rational and immortal creature can appear in a lower and more debased form than it wears in this,—in which man appears more exclusively regardful of the concerns of earth,—where he is less universally and habitually mindful of the diviner ray which connects him with heaven. This alone is a sufficient reason why Jehovah made this earth the scene of his appearance in flesh rather than any other. By clothing himself with the power of operating immediately from himself in such a world as this, and upon men in so low a natural state as are its inhabitants, he necessarily clothed himself with the power of operating immediately in every other natural world in the universe, and of affording in abundance the means of salvation to the whole. To some, the increased energy thus given to the divine influences might not be necessary; to others, doubtless, it was: and by putting it on, provision is made against every contingency. All worlds are enfolded, in a manner which would otherwise have been impossible, in the mantle of divine power and protection.

I have presented this view of this exalted subject, rather in

the way of theory, because it was impossible, in the compass of one Lecture, to support everything with proofs; though some proof, also, has, I trust, been given. But presented only in the way of theory, it must be allowed to be such a theory as, if admitted to be the doctrine of the True Christian Religion, completely harmonizes the True Christian Religion with the astronomical doctrine of a plurality of worlds. But in order to rise to full certainty, it is necessary to have a just view of the doctrines of the True Christian Religion on the subjects of the Divine Unity and Trinity, the Assumption of Humanity by Jehovah in the person of Jesus Christ, the Redemption of Jesus Christ, Salvation by his blood, his Sacrifice, his Mediation, and his Atonement; as these have been presented in the preceding Lectures. It has in them been shown, that, without the assumption and glorification of Humanity by Jehovah himself, the salvation of man would have been impossible;—that it is only from the Humanity of Jesus Christ, glorified and fully united to the Divinity, that those influences of the Holy Spirit can be given, on which depends the salvation of the human race. What is true on these subjects in reference to the human race on this globe, is true also, and, in most cases, perhaps, equally so, in regard to all rational and immortal beings through the visible universe. By this “dispensation of the fulness of times,” the Lord has provided for the “gathering together of all things in one:” and thus hath he “reconciled all things to himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.”

Who, my friends and brethren, can raise his mind to the contemplation of so glorious a truth, without being in a manner carried out of himself, and absorbed in an ecstasy of admiration, adoration, and heavenly transport? How annihilating of everything that is little, mean, and selfish about us, is the view of what we are, in comparison with the indefinite magnitude of the creation, as an image of the Infinity of the Creator; but especially in comparison with the immensity of his love and goodness, in providing that no world he has ever made, nor one inhabitant of it, should vanish entirely from his presence,—and in that, having first invested himself with a suitable form by taking on him the Human Essence, he should, by that as a medium,

have invested himself, as it were, with the whole universe, and secured its eternal connection with himself? And while these considerations are annihilating to everything that is little and selfish in our nature, how exalting are they of everything appertaining to us that is truly noble,—of that heavenly spark within by which we have affinity, in our finite degree, with this great Lord and Father of all, and are capable of rising into his glorious image! Compared with the immensity of the creation, and the Infinity of the Creator, we, individually, are nothing: but considered as having that belonging to us (though all by his gift) in which the Creator can dwell,—as either having, actually, conjunction of life with him, or, at least, the capacity of attaining it,—of being in him, as our Redeemer, and he in us,—a reflection of his Majesty irradiates our nothingness: we feel that, in him, we, also, are something, yea, as much as we could be, were there no other created beings in the universe. The indefinite greatness of the multitude of his rational offspring does not diminish the power of the Almighty Creator and Redeemer of magnifying each to the utmost capability of reception belonging to a created being. Let us cherish, and seek to advance in this our true greatness. Since, by the assumption of our nature, and the redemption of this world and of the universe, our God has again placed us in a free state of probation, and opened the way by which we may return into the bosom of his love, let us take advantage of the inestimable privilege. Let earthly and transient things, and vain and evil pleasures and pursuits, sink into the insignificance which properly belongs to them; and let heavenly and eternal ones,—the substantial goods and enjoyments of an immortal nature, assume their due importance in our eyes. Let us flee into the arms of our Heavenly Father, despising all honour but that which cometh from God only. Let us seek to unite ourselves with our Creator, in his character of Redeemer, and in the person of Jesus Christ.

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## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE FOREGOING LECTURE.

[This Lecture, though it originally occupied a place in the Series in which it now stands, and for which it was composed, was printed by itself, and was therefore illustrated with rather copious Notes. The chief of these are here retained.]

## Note (A). Page 448.

The title of this work is, "Plurality of Worlds: or Letters, Notes, and Memoranda, Philosophical and Critical, occasioned by 'A Series of Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connexion with Modern Astronomy. By Thomas Chalmers, D. D.' By Alexander Maxwell." Second Edition, 1820. The first edition, in 1817, was published anonymously. To some of the Notes I have been much indebted.

## Note (B). Page 451.

The idea suggested in the extract here given from Swedenborg, that the end of the creation of the visible universe is the formation of a heaven out of the human race, is not, I believe, to be found in any other writer; though, to a mind not previously occupied by other ideas, the reasonableness of it is such as to carry instant conviction of its truth. The reason that it has not been generally seen, is because men have been accustomed to look upon angels as beings of a totally different nature and origin from themselves; as beings created in the angelic state at once, without being prepared for it by a life of probation in a previous natural state of existence. Full proof that angels are human beings in a state of glory, that infernal spirits are all from the same origin, and that the Scriptures lend no countenance whatever to the opposite opinion, may be seen in a work by the author of this Lecture, entitled "An Appeal in behalf of the Views of the Eternal World and State, and the Doctrines of Faith and Life, held by the body of Christians who believe that a New Church is signified by the New Jerusalem." 2nd Ed. p. 280, &c. A luminous and convincing statement on the design of the creation of the natural universe, as the basis and seminary



of heaven, from the writings of Swedenborg, is given in the same work, p. 132, 133. For evidence of the title of that writer to be received as an authorized witness on the subjects on which he writes, see that work, Sect. V.

Note (C). Page 454.

On this subject, "The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures," &c., may be consulted, p. 555—576. It is there proved that the first chapter of Genesis is not intended to be a literal account of the creation of the world and universe. But many have shown that even upon the supposition that a description of the natural creation were meant, it contains nothing inconsistent with the doctrine of a plurality of worlds. In the words of Dr. Samuel Pye, (as quoted by Dr. Nares), "What is asserted there of the creation and formation of the earth, may, with the same historical truth, be applied to Jupiter and the other primary planets; and that, therefore, the other primary planets are inhabited; and the notion of revelation may be extended to the inhabitants of every planet in the system." All which would be equally just of every planet in the universe. I add some judicious remarks of Dr. Nares himself: "I am not in the least put out of my way by the moon being called '*a great light*,' set in the heavens to rule our night; for undoubtedly it is so to us; nay, to the bulk of mankind it is (if I may so say) so *revealed* to their senses; and if the word and works of God are to be expected to confirm each other, it is more consonant to the visible works of God, to describe it according to its obvious uses, than if it had been pronounced an opaque globe of earth, reflective of the sun's beams, inhabited (perhaps) like the one we dwell on. Is it of any concern to *us*, physical or moral, whether the heavenly bodies are intrinsically what our senses represent them; or whether they are far different in substance and condition when more fully understood? Is it, I would ask, any impeachment of God's truth in his dealings with mankind, that the moon appears many times bigger than Jupiter and Saturn? Shall we accuse our Maker of having heretofore *deceived* his creatures, because we think we have now found out, that the body of our earth revolves under our feet at the rate of one thousand miles

an hour ; a motion never to be reconciled to our senses ? If I was to grant then, which I do not, that Moses had written, in some respects, unphilosophically ; I should yet contend, that, in the case before us, considering how the works of God appear to our unassisted faculties, the heavenly bodies could not have been otherwise described, consistent with the relations they bear to this particular planet" [*Εἰς Θεός, Εἰς Μουσῆς*, p. 104—106]. These are the observations of sound good sense. The Word of God always speaks, and ought to speak, of natural things according to the appearance. But Dr. Nares is not so happy when he afterwards proceeds to guard us against drawing too strict an analogy between the manner in which God speaks to us in nature and that in which he speaks to us in his Word : though here also he allows that, "in the revelation of the *word* of God, somewhat analogous to this appears."

Note (D). Page 455.

Because the original word, *αιωνας*, does not, in its original meaning, signify *worlds*, but *ages*, or *periods of times*, theologians of the Unitarian School labour hard to exclude that signification here. However, the best scholars affirm, that in various places, of which this is one, it does denote *the whole system of created things, —the universe*. Indeed, this is virtually included in its strict and proper meaning, which, as well defined by Schleusner, is, "any space of time, whether longer or shorter, whether past, present, or still future ; an entire period of duration, accommodated to the things and persons who are the subjects of discourse ; but in such manner, as also to include, by metonymy, the things and persons who continue for the period spoken of, the things made or existing in the time referred to." "The ages," then, as denoting all periods of time, with all things made or existing therein, must here include "the worlds" or the universe. But what would be gained by those who oppose this sense, in the way of depriving the Lord Jesus Christ of his honour, as the maker of *the worlds*, it is not easy to see, when various other passages describe him as the Maker of *all things*.

## Note (E). Page 462.

No disrespect is herein intended towards Dr. Chalmers. No blame whatever is imputable to him: the fault is not in him, but in the materials he had to work with. Great talents may gloss over contradictions, but they cannot reconcile them: and this is precisely the case in Dr. C.'s "Discourses." All must admire the great abilities which he has brought to the undertaking, and the many beautiful thoughts and sentiments which are scattered through his work. That, however, his work has failed in reconciling the philosophical truth with the popular theological doctrines, is, I apprehend, sufficiently obvious from what has been shown in the Lecture. But I will support what is there briefly stated by a few more quotations from the "Discourses."

I have said in the Lecture, (p. 459), that "Dr. Chalmers professes not to allow that Christianity is designed for the single benefit of our world, and, with many taunts, defies the Deist to prove it: but how it contributes to the benefit of the inhabitants of other earths and systems, he leaves the Infidel to discover for himself;" &c. The following is a specimen of his mode of treating this part of the subject:

"In the astronomical objection which Infidelity has proposed against the truth of the Christian revelation, there is first an assertion, and then an argument. The assertion is, that Christianity is set up for the exclusive benefit of our minute and solitary world. The argument is, that God would not lavish such a quantity of attention on so insignificant a field. Even though the assertion be admitted, I should have a quarrel with the argument. But the futility of the objection is not laid open in all its extent, unless we expose the utter want of all essential evidence even for the truth of the assertion. How do Infidels know that Christianity is set up for the single benefit of this earth and its inhabitants? How are they able to tell us, that, if you go to other planets, the person and religion of Jesus are there unknown to them? We challenge them to the proof of this announcement." (P. 76, 77.) Now, with all deference, the proof does not lie with the objector to Christianity on this

ground. Speaking, as the preacher here prudently does, of Christianity itself, these questions may be safely asked. But the astronomical objector knows nothing of Christianity but from the popular representations of it, and they all go upon the supposition, that it is "set up for the single benefit of this earth and its inhabitants." As we have seen in the Lecture, Dr. Chalmers' own representations of it are such as suppose nothing else. It is little to the purpose, then, to endeavour to overwhelm the objector by the following torrent of eloquence: "For anything he can tell, sin has found its way into these other worlds. For any thing he can tell, their people have banished themselves from communion with God. For any thing he can tell, many a visit has been made to each of them, on the subject of our common Christianity, by commissioned messengers from the throne of the Eternal. For any thing he can tell, the redemption proclaimed to us is not one solitary instance, or not the whole, of that redemption which is by the Son of God—but only our part in a plan of mercy, equal in magnificence to all that astronomy has brought within the range of human contemplation. For any thing he can tell, the moral pestilence, which walks abroad over the face of our world, may have spread its desolations over all the planets of all the systems which the telescope has made known to us. For any thing he can tell, some mighty redemption has been devised in heaven, to meet this disaster in the extent and malignity of its visitations. For any thing he can tell, the wonder-working God, who has strewed the field of immensity with so many worlds, and spread the shelter of his omnipotence over them, may have sent a message of love to each, and re-assured the hearts of its despairing people by some overpowering manifestation of tenderness. For anything he can tell, angels from paradise may have sped to every planet their delegated way, and sung, from such azure canopy, a joyful annunciation, and said, 'Peace be to this residence, and good will to all its families, and glory to Him in the highest, who, from the eminency of his throne, has issued an act of grace so magnificent, as to carry the tidings of life and acceptance to the numbered orbs of a sinful creation! For any thing he can tell, the Eternal Son, of whom it is said, that

by him the worlds were created, may have had the government of many sinful worlds laid upon his shoulders; and by the power of his mysterious word, have awoke them all from that spiritual death, to which they had sunk in lethargy as profound as the slumbers of non-existence. For any thing he can tell, the one Spirit who moved on the face of the waters, and whose presiding influence it was that hushed the wild war of nature's elements, and made a beauteous system emerge out of its disjointed materials, may now be working with the fragments of another chaos, and educing order, and obedience, and harmony, out of the wrecks of a moral rebellion, which reaches through all these spheres, and spreads disorder to the uttermost limits of our astronomy." (P. 79—81.)

Some of these suggestions are truly magnificent, and, what is more, they present the real truth. But if they present the truth, they demonstrate the popular doctrine of redemption to be erroneous. This incongruity Dr. C. has made no attempt to remove: and thus the best of these suggestions, sublime as they are, do not at all tend to the solution of the objector's difficulties. He talks indeed sometimes, as if he were going to prove that the redemption of our world really extended to others. He says, at the close of his third Discourse, that "it is not merely asserted, what in our last Discourse has been already done [in the extracts just adduced], that, for anything we can know by reason, the plan of redemption may have its influences and its bearings on those creatures of God who people other regions and occupy other fields in the immensity of his dominions;"—"the Christian apologist thinks he can go farther than this—that he cannot merely expose the utter baselessness of the Infidel assertion, but that he has positive ground for erecting an opposite and confronting assertion in its place." This leads us to expect that the "confronting assertion" will be made and supported in the next Discourse. Is it so? After a long introduction the tendency of which is to prevent the reader from expecting too much, we at length come to this statement: "The informations of the Bible upon this subject are of two sorts—that from which we confidently gather the fact, that the history of the redemption of our species is known in other and distant places of the

creation—and that, from which we indistinctly guess at the fact, that the redemption itself may stretch beyond the limits of the world we occupy." (P. 135.) Here we again are led to expect, that both these propositions are to be illustrated. But we expect in vain. The latter is never taken up at all. The author most copiously labours the argument, that the history of the redemption of this earth is known to others; but he proposes no other positive advantage to them but that of the moral display;—"the moral display of the Godhead is mainly and substantially the same as if it reached throughout the whole of the habitable extent which the science of astronomy has made known to us. By the disobedience of this one world the law was trampled on—and, in the business of making truth and mercy to meet, and have a harmonious accomplishment on the men of this world, the dignity of God was put to the same trial: the justice of God appeared to lay the same immovable barrier; the wisdom of God had to clear a way through the same difficulties; the forgiveness of God had to find the same mysterious conveyance to the sinners of a solitary world, as to the sinners of half a universe." (P. 143.) "As we talk of the public mind of a city, or the public mind of an empire—by the well-frequented avenues of a free and ready circulation, a public mind might be formed throughout the whole extent of God's sinless and intelligent creation—and, just as we often read of the eyes of all Europe being turned to one spot where some affair of eventful importance is going on, there might the eyes of a whole universe be turned to one world, where rebellion against the Majesty of heaven had planted its standard; and for the re-admission of which within the circle of his fellowship, God, whose justice was inflexible, but whose mercy he had, by some plan of mysterious wisdom, made to rejoice over it, was putting forth all the might, and travelling in all the greatness of the attributes which belonged to him." (P. 136, 137).

Here again we might well repeat the observations appended to the quotations from this writer in the Lecture: he seems to delight in stating what he considers as the divine plan for reconciling Divine Justice with Divine Mercy in terms fully tantamount to those in which I have stated it in the preceding

Lectures. And thus it always is with this eloquent writer: he never extends the benefit of redemption to other worlds any otherwise than as the theme of contemplation. He evidently felt that the purely artificial "plan of redemption" which he has adopted from the popular system of theology, cannot possibly be adapted to any other world than this. Even the knowledge of it in other worlds he makes a result of the sinless state of the inhabitants of those worlds, and their consequent familiar intercourse with angels. Had they any real need of the redemption wrought here, they would, it seems, know no more about it, than we know of transactions performed among them. Thus, while he calls upon the Infidel to form a system of redemption that would include all the earths in the universe, he plainly acknowledges that such a system must be a very different one from his own. It will perhaps be said, that he does not extend redemption to other earths, because the Scriptures do not speak positively on the subject. Suppose it were so, his system of redemption ought to be such as is capable of including other earths, upon the supposition that there are such earths; which he admits and strenuously advocates. We know that this earth is inhabited: and we infer from analogy, that all other earths are inhabited also. We know that here a redemption has been wrought; and we have precisely the same ground of analogy for inferring, that this likewise, is not a private affair, including our earth alone. And though the Scriptures do not positively teach the existence of other natural worlds, it has been shown, in the Lecture, that they do positively teach, that if there are other worlds, the benefits of the assumption by Jehovah of Humanity here, thus of redemption, extend to all. The inventors of the popular system of theology had no knowledge of the existence of any earth but this. To the circumstances of this earth alone they adapted it. But when we admit the immensely enlarged idea of an indefinite multitude of earths in the universe, it is indeed sewing a piece of new cloth on an old garment, to endeavour to connect this with the old narrow, contracted notions of a redemption calculated for the descendants of Adam only.

## Note (F). Page 463.

The title of Dr. Nares' work is "*Εἰς Θεός, Εἰς Μένους* ; or, an Attempt to show how far the Philosophical Notion of a Plurality of Worlds is consistent, or not so, with the Language of the Holy Scriptures." I take a few extracts to show the beauty of some of his conceptions, though he takes no pains to set them off with Dr. Chalmers' splendour of language. "I by no means can bring myself to limit my ideas of the mediatorial scheme to this our system. I cannot think the words of St. Paul require this of us ; 'for he hath put all things under his feet ;' or, in other words, for the Father hath put all things under the feet of Christ. But we must except whom ? *He* which did put all things under the feet of Christ. All things else therefore but the Deity : not only this pitiful globe of ours ; but all the plurality of worlds, and variety of beings, that infinite space can contain." (P. 27.) "I leave the mode of redemption, and all the circumstances relative to the personal interposition of the Godhead, to be determined by Scripture ; only submitting it as a question, rather of curiosity than importance, whether the atonement made for man may not have been made for the *creature* generally ? Or in other words, whether we are not at liberty to consider our blessed Saviour as Mediator, not between God and man, as the inhabitant of this globe, but more largely, between the CREATOR and the *creature* ?" (P. 39—42.) "The whole is but conjecture, as relates to other worlds, though founded upon the actual fact of the Incarnation of the Godhead among ourselves ; which, having accomplished for us all that we could desire, and more than we deserve ; having made us acquainted with the only efficacious means of grace, and set before us the brightest hopes of glory, may, we presume to suppose, have been of like efficacy to all who should have stood in need of such an interposition of the divine grace and mercy. And this of itself would almost serve to render all the passages of Scripture, relating to this divine truth, as comprehensible as this system would require : for it is only supposing the other worlds to be peopled with rational creatures, that they are frail like ourselves, and all ultimately to be judged by the Mediator, as we



shall be ; and the application is the same. (P. 44, 45.) "It is only by reasoning from analogy that we are brought to suppose, that the system of the universe may be as it has been represented : and it is only by analogy, also, that we have ventured to infer, that, if this system be a physical truth, then, perhaps, the dispensations of GRACE may be found to correspond, and THE WHOLE UNIVERSE to be knit together by the '*unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, one body, one spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all.*'" (P. 73, 74.) The following very remarkable passage is quoted by Dr. N. (p. 44), from Dr. H. More's "Dialogues concerning the Attributes and Providence of God." "Lapsed souls, wherever they are, that recover into sincerity, are saved *δια τῆς Θεανθρωπίας*, by the divine humanity or human divinity, of the Son of God ; which is the inmost and deepest arcanum of our Christian Religion, and it is the privilege of the Christian world, that they have this mystery so plainly and distinctly communicated to them by the preaching of the gospel. But the efficacy of the said mystery may also be derived to them that never heard it sound externally and historically to their outward ears : for the Spirit of the Lord passes through the whole universe, and communicates this mystery to all souls, wherever they are, that are fitted to receive it, in a more hidden and miraculous way, such as himself, and at what time himself, shall please to make use of. This I think the most sober solution of the present difficulty, upon the supposition that there are any men, properly so called, that inhabit those planets or earths you speak of." Many more excellent observations, both of his own and of the authors he quotes, might be cited, would space permit, from Dr. Nares. Some others will be given in the next note.

Dr. Beattie, in his "Evidences of the Christian Religion," gives the same ideas as are taken up by Dr. Chalmers respecting "our fall and recovery being useful to the natives of other worlds as an example, and the 'divine grace manifested in our redemption raising their admiration :'" and Mr. A. Fuller, in his "Gospel its own Witness," suggests the very thoughts in answer to the objection as to the insignificance of the field on which the

scene was transacted, which Dr. Chalmers has so extensively amplified, but without any reference to prior authorities. The passages are adduced by Mr. Maxwell, and the former of them by Dr. Nares.

Bishop Porteus (also cited by both the last named writers) puts the argument on the right footing, in the following striking passage in his sermons : " On what ground is it concluded that the benefits of Christ's death extend no farther than to ourselves ? As well might we suppose, that the sun was placed in the firmament merely to illuminate and warm this earth that we inhabit. To the vulgar and illiterate this actually appears to be the case. But philosophy teaches us better things : it enlarges our contracted views of divine beneficence, and brings us acquainted with other planets and other worlds, which share with us the cheering influence and vivifying warmth of that glorious luminary. Is it not then a fair analogy to conclude, that the great spiritual Light of the world, the Fountain of life and health and joy to the soul, does not scatter his blessings over the creation with a more sparing hand ? and that the Sun of righteousness rises, with healing in his wings, to other orders of beings besides ourselves ? Nor does this conclusion rest on analogy alone. It is evident, from Scripture itself, that we are by no means the only creatures in the universe interested in the sacrifice of our Redeemer. (See Eph. i. 10 ; Col. i. 16, 20.) From intimations such as these, it is highly probable, that, in the great work of redemption, as well as of creation, there is a vast stupendous plan of wisdom, of which we cannot at present so much as conceive the whole compass and extent : and, if we could assist and improve the mental as we can the corporeal sight ; if we could magnify and bring nearer to us, by the help of instruments, the great component parts of the spiritual, as we do the vast bodies of the natural world, there can be no doubt but that the resemblance and analogy would hold between them in this, as it does in numberless other well known instances ; and that a scene of wonders would burst upon us from the one, at least equal, if not superior, to those which the united powers of astronomy and optics disclose to us in the other." (*Works*, vol. iii. p. 70.) All this, and more that the good bishop offers,

is equally beautiful and true : but then, if the "death" and "sacrifice of our Redeemer" have this wide-extended efficacy, it is evident that their operations must be of a different kind from that which is ascribed to them in the popular system of theology.

Mr. Maxwell, whose work, "Plurality of Worlds," &c. has been already mentioned, truly observes (p. 192), that "these opinions approximate very near to those of Emanuel Swedenborg," whose views, as he had the sagacity to discern, are the only ones which will properly combine with the doctrine of a plurality of worlds. Hence he remarks, "In my opinion, the professors of Christianity who adopt this philosophical theory, are in the direct road, if they knew it, of receiving all the visions of Swedenborg." (P. 196.) But when he wrote that work, he obviously, like most others, was under the influence of considerable prejudice in regard to Swedenborg. He otherwise would not have spoken of him as "removing the doctrine of atonement;" for he would have known that he removes nothing but the mistakes with which the doctrine is encompassed. Nor would he have spoken of his "visions." Swedenborg's works, for the most part, consist of expositions of the Scriptures and elucidations of the Christian doctrines. Some parts contain communications relative to the spiritual world and the state of man after death : but a candid examiner will find ample reason to conclude, that there is, even in these, much more of reality than of mere "vision." Dr. Nares, also, adopts the popular prejudice in calling him an "enthusiast;" whence he expresses surprise at finding in his writings some striking and uncommon truths.

It seems but candid to observe, that the learned author of the "Plurality of Worlds," &c., has since done all that he spoke of when he wrote, "The professors of Christianity, who adopt this theory, are in the direct road, if they knew it, of receiving all the visions of Swedenborg:" only, I believe, it was not the former step that led him to the latter, but the latter which led him to the former. Having commenced the study of the writings of Swedenborg with a view to their refutation, he was gradually led to a conviction of their truth, and embraced, with their other

truths, that of the plurality of worlds, against which he had so zealously written.

Note (G). Page 465.

I here add a few more extracts from the amiable and learned Dr. Nares, who has evidently thought very profoundly on this subject, and from authors whom he quotes.

"Without subjecting," says he, "the Supreme to a fate above him, as was the fashion of old, it is known there are some things impossible even to him. He cannot ordain a thing to be and not to be at the same time. It is reasonable to suppose, that he could not, without permitting pain and evil to a certain extent, have conferred on sensible beings that measure of happiness which arises from a comparison with preceding misery. Neither, therefore, could he so well have rendered any beings sensible of that measure of perfection which must ensue from a comparison with preceding imperfections. If we suppose, then, that the Creator would design the happiness and perfection, one time or other, of the creature, he could not have brought them to a state of happiness and perfection otherwise than gradually.—What then shall we say of the benevolence of an Omnipotent Being, who creates an order of animals, capable in a great degree, of working out their own perfection; and consents to relinquish somewhat of his own irresistible might, to render them free, and to exalt their natures?" (P. 27—30.)—"If our globe is but one of many myriads, it is a strange conceit to think it is the only one inhabited by frail and peccable mortals." (P. 60.) "In the nature of things, and according to the tenor of Scripture, all rational beings whatsoever, capable of good and evil, of obedience and disobedience, *must* be created originally in a state of trial and probation." (P. 17, from *Clarke*.) "It is probable, all kinds of rational beings, as well as we, have their state of probation; that an uninterrupted, everlasting enjoyment of unalloyed happiness, virtue, truth, is too great a prize to be attained without any antecedent state of trial." (*lb.* from *Seed*.) "The most ancient fathers of the church seem to agree in considering the first state of man, though capable of immortality without death, yet so far imperfect, as it was conditional, and therefore

only to be advanced to perfection upon trial ; and they all appear to describe the condition of the creature, not as perfect at first, but only as capable of being advanced to perfection by the Creator in time to come. See Bishop Bull on 'The State of Man before the Fall.'" (P. 19.) "Plato, unwilling to allow God to be the cause of evil, and yet not admitting a co-ordinate principle (though Plutarch would attribute this to him), imputed all evil to the necessity of imperfect beings ; that God was nothing else but good ; but that the necessity of imperfect things unavoidably gives being and birth to evils : and therefore he thinks evils cannot be utterly destroyed, at least in this lower world. This necessity of imperfect beings he represents as not to be restrained or overcome even by God ; that it resist and refuses the bridle : *Ανάγκη πολλὰ τῷ Θεῷ δυσμάχουσα καὶ ἀφηνιαίουσα*. Mind, or God, however, is in the end to get the better, according to Plato, of this necessity ; and this must needs be known to be the greatest art of all, to be able *αγαθοποιεῖν τὰ κακὰ* to *bonify* evils. See 'Wise against Atheism,' vol. i. p. 136, and Cudworth, ch. iv." (P. 28.)















